The Cinderella-Man

A Comedy in Four Acts

BY

EDWARD CHILDS CARPENTER.

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CHARACTERS

MARJORIE CANER.

MORRIS T. CANER, her father.

D. ROMNEY EVANS, a Lawyer.

ALBERT SEWALL, a Composer.

DR. JOSEPH THAYER.

ANTHONY QUINTARD.

WALTER NICOLLS.

BLODGETT, Butler at Caner's

CELESTE, Marjorie's French Maid.

JERRY PRIMROSE.

THE GREAT SHE-BEAR!

ACT I

The New York Mansion of Morris T. Caner.

SCENE:

A massive, palatial, drawing-room. The tone of the room is cold grey with decorations in old blue and silver. The heavy tapestry hangings and the upholstery are old gold and silver. The walls are broken with Gobelin tapestry panels framed in silver. There are huge silver sconces either side of the panels. All of the furniture is massive, almost as though the house were inhabited by giants. In the centre of the back flat, a wide arched entrance, backed by a hallway in which the same blue predominates. To the R. and L. of the C.E. stand massive throne chairs against the walls. A round, ornate table L. side of C. E. In the R. flat a series of very high and arched windows extend down to the floor. Near by the windows, the largest grand piano obtainable, set with its keyboard facing the R. upper corner of the stage. A tall vase on the piano with calla-lilies in it. A piano bench at the piano. A music cabinet up stage R. A broad, low, very heavy carved settee stands at the lower end of the piano. In the L. flat a high arched entrance midway up stage. A blue and silver screen in front of this entrance. An enormous and ornate fireplace midway down stage L. Candelabra, porcelain jars, a brass match box on the mantel. A white bearskin rug in front of the fireplace. Opposite the fireplace, L. of L.C., a tremendously long, big and heavy davenport upholstered in silver and blue brocade, faces the audience. Backed against the davenport is a long carved table, draped and set out with a few fine pieces of porcelain and candelabra. A big chair at the table.

The time is about six-thirty. The room is illuminated with a cold but soft light; the hallway with anamber light.

Rise of curtain discovers MORRIS T. CANER and DR. JOSEPH THAYER up stage L. of C.E. CANER is about 55 years of age, six feet tall, heavily built without being stout, hale and hearty, with a ruddy complexion, sandy-grey hair and closely cropped moustache—a type of the Captain of Industry, used to ordering and being obeyed. He wears immaculate evening dress. He leans a little on the cane, nurses his right leg at every opportunity,

being afflicted with a severe attack of rheumatism. THAYER is tall, smart-looking, professional, gentlemanly, crisp. Age, about 50. *Wears evening dress. CANER is showing THAYER a small Chinese vase, antique pale blue and white pattern of the Hsuan-te reign period.*

CANER (*With great enthusiasm*)—Look at that! Isn't it a beauty—a little masterpiece? Not another like it in this country! Not one! Picked it up at auction today with a lot of junk—right under Duveen's nose! He never saw it—he would have given his eyes for it! Duveen! I've beaten him—beaten him! Ha, Ha, Ha! No pedigree! But I guessed what it was! You think all I know is coke and steel, eh! But I've got an instinct!—an instinct! I don't need a catalogue to tell me when I see a genuine antique! But I bought better than I knew! Old Humphries—he's collecting porcelains to send back to China—he knows, the old dog!—(*Excitedly, prancing about*)—And what did he tell me?—produced in the Ming dynasty—about 1403—Hsuan-te reign! See that—that's what you call Mohammedan blue! What do you think of it? (*Places vase on table, looks at it with enthusiasm*).

THAYER—Quite a bit of luck, but you've no business to be dancing about on that rheumatic leg of yours!

CANER—It's MY leg!

THAYER—But you're my patient! Sit down!—(*Takes Caner by arm to lead him to chair back of table L.C.*)

CANER—(*Pushing Thayer away*)—I'm bored with sitting down!—(*Leans against edge of table*)—At this very minute I should be at the pier—my daughter is arriving from France!—(*Lays cane on table*).

THAYER—(*Sarcastically*)—Seems to me you're taking a violent interest in her all of a sudden!

CANER—Only because I've GOT to! I tell you, Joe, I don't want ANY woman in my house!

THAYER—Selfish brute!

CANER—If I had any decent relatives living, I'd pack the girl off to them! She'll be a confounded nuisance—a positive embarrassment.

THAYER—(*With humor*)—You know—it's barely possible—you may like your daughter when you see her!

CANER—There isn't a chance!

THAYER—When did you see her last!

CANER—I haven't laid eyes on her for fourteen years.

THAYER—I didn't realize it was as long as that! Why didn't you bring her home, yourself—three months ago—when her mother died?

CANER—When my wife and I separated—that was the end!

THAYER—The end between you and your wife, maybe, but not between you and your child, Morris! I'm ashamed of you!

CANER—I've done all that could be expected of me under the circumstances! I made no fuss when she took Marjorie away—I always gave her all the money she could spend!

THAYER—Did you ever give Marjorie a THOUGHT?

CANER—I gave her an allowance—a damn big one!

THAYER—Did you ever write her a single LETTER?

CANER—Yes, I did. I wrote her when I got word of her mother's death—to draw on me for whatever she wanted!

THAYER—And I suppose Romney Evans spared you even that feeble effort!

CANER—What's the use in having a lawyer if he can't write an occasional letter for you?—(*Thayer shakes his head in contempt*)—Besides, Romney likes writing in words of one syllable! I don't!

THAYER—(*Looking at Caner with contempt*)—By Jove, you know—you've succeeded in everything—except as a father! There you've been a failure—a failure, Morris—just as much as any drunken old slob that neglects his family! In fact, you're a hell of a father!

CANER—(*Hotly*)—You didn't know my wife!

THAYER—Yes I did! She was a fine woman! She had too much spunk to put up with your temper!

CANER—MY temper? She was the most obstinate woman that ever lived! She died just to irritate me!

THAYER—All I've got to say is—I hope you'll treat the daughter better than you did the wife!

CANER—I won't take any nonsense from Marjorie!

THAYER—Then take some advice from me—and lavish a little attention on her—treat her like your pet railroad! And remember, you old grouch, that she is your only child—your heiress!

CANER—Heiress! Hah! More trouble! Men—after her for MY money!

THAYER—There's the pity of it—FOR HER!

CANER—(*Confidentially*)—It's happened already! Some cub she met at Nice last summer! Nicolls is his name! Impudent young beggar! Called at my office a few weeks ago—gave me the

idea that he and Marjorie are too damned intimate!—(*Door bell buzzes. Presently BLODGETT, the butler passes C.E. in hallway from L. to R.*)

THAYER—Have you taken the trouble to look him up?

CANER—(*Warmly*)—I have! He's a—a drone—a waster—a parasite—brought up with the notion that all he has to do is to marry some rich girl! But I won't have him in my family. (*Blodgett appears at C.E. from R. He is old, tall, lean, and very dignified*).

BLODGETT—(*Announcing*)—Miss Marjorie Caner! Mr. Romney Evans!—(*Caner and Thayer start, and go up L.C. Caner leaves his stick on the table back of davenport. MARJORIE CANER appears at C.E., followed by ROMNEY EVANS. CELESTE, a French maid, carrying a small handbag, appears back of them, standing in the hall. In a moment she disappears L. in hall with Blodgett. MARJORIE is* 19, *small, dainty, pretty, with charming natural manners. She is exquisitely dressed in the deepest sort of French mourning. ROMNEY is about* 50, *tall, slender, keen but kindly looking, partially bald, a gentleman. He wears eye-glasses, smart evening dress*).

MARJORIE—(*Looking wistfully, from Thayer to Caner and from Caner to Thayer*)—Which—is—my—Pa-pa?

CANER—(*Embarrassed*)—I—I am your father! How do you do?—(*Holding out his hand to her*).

MARJORIE—(*Taking his hand*)—In France—fathers kiss their—their daughters! Isn't it done here?

CANER—(*Embarrassed*)—I—I believe so! It all depends upon how—how you feel about it!

MARJORIE—I feel about it just like any other girl; but perhaps you—you don't feel about it like—some fathers! You see, I'm rather a—strange daughter to you!

THAYER—For God's sake, kiss the girl!

CANER—(*Snapping at Thayer*)—I'm going to—I'm going to!

MARJORIE—Yes, you must begin sometime—so it may as well be now!—(*Caner stoops to her. She kisses him daintly*)—There! It's all over! You didn't mind very much!

CANER—(*Gruffly*)—Mind it? Why should I? I may not be the perfect pattern of a father, but I dare say that I'm no worse than you expected!

MARJORIE—I think you're going to turn out very well!

CANER—(*With gruff humor*)—Then you're not disappointed in me?

MARJORIE—Oh no—I was afraid that you wouldn't care to have me here at all, but you seem to be—(*Hesitates*)—quite—cordial!—(*Pause. Looks at him seriously, wistfully*)—You're really glad—to see me?

CANER—What—what's that?

THAYER—Of course you're glad to see her! Tell her how glad you are!

CANER—Yes—yes—i'm—I'm glad—certainly!

MARJORIE—Thank you, Pa-pa! That's going to make it ever so much easier for me!

CANER—(*With a grunt*)—You're a strange little thing!

MARJORIE—I do feel a little strange! I suppose that's because I've been away from home so long!—(*Looking about*)—This big place is "home," isn't it?

CANER—Naturally!

MARJORIE—H-o-m-e!—(*Nervously*)—Where's Romney?—(*Turning to Romney. Then with relief*)—Oh, there you are!—(*Romney takes her hand. She clings to his*).

CANER—And this is Dr. Thayer—(*With a flash of humor*)—one of the most disagreeable friends I have!

MARJORIE—(*Offering her hand to Thayer*)—You don't LOOK a bit disagreeable!

THAYER—I'm not—really, my dear! I only wish I were an uncle or a father of yours—anything that would entitle me to an embrace!—(*Pats her hand*).

MARJORIE—(*Reluctantly letting go of Romney's hand and accepting Thayer's*)—Perhaps—when I know you better—

CANER—You don't need to kiss every man you meet!

MARJORIE—I don't! But I couldn't help it I had to hug Romney—at the pier. We've been such friends—writing to each other for years—(*To Romney, repossessing herself of his hand*)—haven't we?—(*Romney nods, pats her hand*)—I knew him right away—didn't I—(*Romney nods and smiles*)—And I've never seen even a picture of him! You see he wrote me such a cunning description of himself! I was so excited—looking for a tall bald-headed man with a little red feather in his hat!—(*To Romney*)—I hope you didn't catch cold.—(*To the others*)—Romney kept holding up his hat so that I could see the red feather and his bald head at the same time! And it was so sweet of such a smart person as Romney to put a red feather in his silk hat—just for me.—(*Suddenly, contritely*)—Oh, Pa-pa—I forgot! Please forgive me! How is your foot? Romney told me about it.

CANER—Bad! Very bad!—(*Looks slurringly at Thayer*).

MARJORIE—(*To Thayer*)—What are you giving him?

THAYER—Aspirin!

MARJORIE—That's good! I know! Mother and I—(*She is affected for an instant by the memory of her mother*)—we had a concierge in Paris with rheumatism! That's what we gave him—ten grains every two hours! It cured him! And surely if it would cure a concierge, it ought to cure Pa-pa! Perhaps he doesn't obey your orders! I don't suppose he's a very good patient—men aren't!

THAYER—Your father is the worst patient in the Western Hemisphere!

MARJORIE—I thought so. Pa-pa, have you taken your medicine?

CANER—I—I don't remember.

MARJORIE—Where is your medicine?

CANER—I don't know.

MARJORIE—But you must take it—at once! How are we to get you well if you don't?

CANER—I'll take it. I'll take it! Now run along—and dress for dinner! And—look here, Marjorie—(*Indicating her mourning*)—I don't want to see you dressed like that!

MARJORIE—(*Puzzled*)—Why? What's wrong with this?

CANER—It's too much black, for a little girl like you!—(*Marjorie looks up at him, wide-eyed, solemnly, feeling behind her for Romney's hand. Romney takes her hand, holds it, comfortingly*).—I want you to take it off—take it all off!

MARJORIE—(*Hurt—speaking softly*)—But I wear this for—mother.

CANER—I know—but I'd rather see you in a more cheerful looking frock!—(*Marjorie looks up at him wonderingly, with a quivering little sigh*)—Blodgett!—(*Blodgett comes to the C.E. from L.*)—Marjorie—this is Blodgett! Blodgett, show Miss Marjorie to her rooms!

BLODGETT—Yes, sir!—(*Takes letter from pocket and gives it to Marjorie*)—It came for you this morning, Miss.

MARJORIE—(*Mechanically taking letter from him*)—Thank you—(*To C.E.*)—Celeste!—(*Blodgett makes way for CELESTE, who appears in hallway from L.*)

CELESTE—Oui, Mademoiselle!—(*Marjorie makes a dignified little bow to the men and exits C.E. following Blodgett and Celeste through hallway to L.*)

CANER—(*To Romney*)—You saw that letter? It was Nicoll's monogram on the envelope!

ROMNEY—Yes. But you needn't be uneasy. I mentioned Nicolls, coming up in the car.

CANER—(*Limping down to chair at table back of davenport. impatiently*)—Well, well—what did you say to her?

ROMNEY—(*Coming down R. of table*)—I suggested—mildly—that she must be sure the young man has not been more dazzled by her wealth—than her beauty!—(*Thayer comes down to fireplace L.*)

CANER—(*Impatiently*)—What did SHE say?

ROMNEY—Nothing much! But she doesn't love him. She only thinks she does.

CANER—(*Sarcastically to Thayer*)—*Romney has X-ray powers* of penetration!

ROMNEY—I can see through you for all the frost on your panes!

THAYER—"Frost" is the right word.

ROMNEY—(*After a glance at C.E., where Marjorie made her exit*)—Poor little thing—she's lonely—wants something to love—Nicolls is the first young man she has ever known intimately.

CANER—(*Irritably*)—Intimately!—(*To Thayer*)—What did I tell you, Joe!—(*To Romney*)—There's an understanding between them.

ROMNEY—Perhaps. But from what I gathered, I'd say Nicolls was merely on probation.

CANER—Huh!—(*Ponders. Pause*).

ROMNEY—By-the-by, Christmas is day after to-morrow! We've got to make it cheery for Marjorie!

CANER—(*Irritably*)—I will—I will, I'll give her a pearl necklace—an automobile.

ROMNEY—You talk like a barbarian! It isn't presents she wants—it's cheerful companionship—diversion!

CANER—All right—all right! I'll give her a ball.

ROMNEY—(*With a groan*)—Your ideas are so primitive. Marjorie doesn't want a ball. Poor little thing's in mourning.

CANER—Then I give it up! I'll leave her to you. I'll give her to you! Romney, I wish you'd marry the child.

ROMNEY—(*With a laugh*)—I would—if I were twenty-five years younger—and she were willing!

CANER—I'm serious. She'd be safe with you.

ROMNEY—No girl wants to be safe—she wants to be happy!

CANER—Oh, what do you know about it anyway?

ROMNEY—I remember what you, you old fossil, never knew—YOUTH! You don't know what that means. It isn't middle age! It's ROMANCE! That's what Marjorie needs—to make her happy—her own romance!

CANER—Pooh! Romance? It's a myth—you know it!

ROMNEY—I know I missed it! But Marjorie shan't. This is the open mating season for her—and, by Jove, I'm going to KEEP it open for her!

CANER—(*Hotly*)—I'll have something to say about that!

ROMNEY—You won't!

THAYER—That will do! Come on, Romney. Let's have a go at billiards.

ROMNEY—Is there time before dinner?

CANER—(*Laying hold of his stick*)—Plenty. It'll take that girl an hour to powder her nose.—(*Rises*).

THAYER—(*To Caner*)—You can't stand around and play on that leg! We'll let you score.

CANER—I won't score. Sewall will be here presently. He and I'll have a go at chess.—(*Exeunt Caner, Thayer and Romney L.U.E.*)

ROMNEY—(*Off stage, his voice fading gradually*)—Sewall's coming to entertain Marjorie—not you!

(*After a moment, MARJORIE appears at C.E. from L. She is exquisitely dressed in a girlish semi-evening gown of white mourning. She looks about, wondering where the men are. Then comes slowly down stage, inspecting the room, and sits in the centre of the davenport*).

(*She is lonely. Presently she takes the letter. which Blodgett gave her, from her breast and reads it. It gives her a great deal of satisfaction, cheers her up. She returns the letter to her breast. Sits motionless*).

(*Now she begins to grow more lonely again, until in desperation she rises suddenly, goes to the L.U.E., looks off, sees no one; looks about the room. Walks down and stands C., turns her back to the audience; looks about again; then goes to the settee below piano R.C., climbs up on settee and takes calla-lily from tall vase; climbs down, goes up stage and puts lily in the jar on round table; surveys effect. Then tries to move the throne chairs. They are too heavy. Looks about for help; finds button in wall near C.E., pushes it, then turns and goes to fireplace, taking a position on the bear-skin rug, her back to the fireplace. which dwarfs her, and with her eyes on C.E. Blodgett appears at C.E.*)

MARJORIE—Blodgett, please come here.—(*Blodgett comes down L.C.*)—Blodgett, is this the state drawing-room—or what?

BLODGETT—This is the SMALL drawing-room—the large drawing-room, the music room, and the gallery are off there, Miss!—(*Indicating it*)—I'll have them lighted up if you wish!

MARJORIE—No thank you—this is big enough and cold enough for me!

BLODGETT—(*Coldly*)—We try to keep them comfortable, Miss.

MARJORIE—Nobody would be comfortable in this room—except a giant and his family. The furniture is perfectly enormous! . . . Why is it stuck about in such a stiff way? This—this davenport—looks as though it were posing for its photograph!

BLODGETT—(*Coldly*)—It's always been that way, Miss.

MARJORIE—I'd change it myself—only it's ALL NAILED DOWN!

BLODGETT—Excuse me, Miss, but it's not nailed down.

MARJORIE—(*Lays hold of davenport*)—Then we'll change it now!

BLODGETT—(*Horror struck*)—I wouldn't like to—without your father's permission.

MARJORIE—Please, Blodgett—please.

BLODGETT—I hope you won't insist, Miss.

MARJORIE—I DO insist!—(*Takes Blodgett by the arm and draws him to davenport*)—We'll begin with this hulking old davenport.

BLODGETT—(*Disgusted*)—I know your father, Miss. He won't like it!

MARJORIE—(*Actually placing Blodgett's hands on the table back of davenport, and making him assist her, moving it aside*)—He mightn't if we asked him—but when he SEES how we have improved things—he'll be so surprised and delighted—

BLODGETT—(*Sourly*)—That he'll give me my notice.

MARJORIE—(*Drawing Blodgett to davenport; he comes reluctantly*)—Good gracious! If that's what you're afraid of, I'll take the blame! But my father's sure to be pleased. He would have done it himself, if he'd ever thought of it!—(*As she directs the turning of the davenport so that it shall face fireplace*)—Your own artistic sense, Blodgett, must tell you—that this davenport ought to face the fireplace.

BLODGETT—(*As he swings davenport about to face fireplace. With a sigh*)—You'll be sorry, Miss.

MARJORIE—There! That's splendid! Now the table!—(*Helps Blodgett to move table*)—We want it—against the back of the davenport! Now—let me see!—(*Looks about room.*)

BLODGETT—(*Disgusted, worried*)—You're not going to move anything else—are you, Miss?

MARJORIE—Oh, yes! We've just begun! That throne chair up there!—(*Points to throne chair up stage L. of C.E. Blodgett goes up to get it, wearily*)—I want it right here!—(*Points to spot upon which she is standing, just R. of table L.C.*)

BLODGETT—(*Dragging throne chair down to L.C.*)—Excuse me, Miss, but haven't we done enough for to-night?—(*CANER enters L.U.E., carrying his stick. He stops there, first amazed, then angry at the sight of the changes in the room*).

MARJORIE—(*Helping Blodgett set the chair as she wants it*)—You like it that way—don't you?

BLODGETT—No, Miss—I do think the old way's the safest!

CANER—(*Coming down L. in front of fireplace, exploding*)—Blodgett, are you out of your mind?—(*Blodgett starts from the chair, as though it were something hot, and stands C. stiffly, stoically, prepared for the storm to break*).

MARJORIE—(*With her hand on the throne chair, looking innocently at Caner, speaking quietly*)—No—no! He's been helping me! He doesn't like it, but I think it's quite an improvement—don't you, pa-pa?

CANER—(*Emphatically, angrily*)—No! I do not!—(*To Blodgett*)—Blodgett, what the deuce do you mean by moving the furniture about in this disorderly manner?

BLODGETT—I thought, sir, that——

MARJORIE—You don't have to lie, like a gentleman, Blodgett!—(*To Caner*)—I MADE him do it!

CANER—(*Angrily*)—He had no business to mind a chit of a girl like you!

MARJORIE—But I told him I'd discharge him, if he didn't—didn't I, Blodgett?

BLODGETT—Yes, Miss!

CANER—(*Tartly to Marjorie*)—Who do you think you are, anyway?

MARJORIE—I naturally supposed, Pa-pa, when you invited me to live with you, that I would be mistress of the house!

CANER—(*Ignoring her*)—Blodgett, put that furniture back where you found it—and see that it stays there.

MARJORIE—But, Pa-pa, it looks so much better the way it is!

CANER—Blodgett, you understand what I said?

BLODGETT—(*Laying hold of throne chair*)—Yes, sir!—(*Takes throne chair and replaces it up stage*).

MARJORIE—(*To Caner*)—It isn't polite for you to countermand my orders that way.—(*Blodgett comes down stage and moves table*).

CANER—This is my house—not yours, young lady!

MARJORIE—(*Hurt, but with spirit*)—You're certainly not making me feel very much at HOME in it!—(*Blodgett swings davenport around from fireplace, to face down stage again*).

CANER—(*Giving davenport a vicious shove with his cane*)—You'll have to LEARN to feel at home in it!

MARJORIE—(*Quietly, with a little quiver in her voice*)—Is that the way you treated—mother?

(*Caner starts, stung by the question. His impulse is to fly into a rage, but as he looks at the hurt yet unafraid little figure standing before him, it comes over him that he has been brutal to her. He takes a deep breath, squares his shoulders*).

CANER—(*Quietly, but with genuine dignity*)—Marjorie, I lost my temper! I beg your pardon!

MARJORIE—(*Not "freshly," but with quaint seriousness*)—I really think you should—although I know it must be very hard for a—big man like you to apologize to a—little girl like me.

CANER—I think we can come to an understanding! This is your home now. The servants are to obey you!—(*After a moment's consideration*)—You may have whatever you want for your comfort or your pleasure—so long as it does not upset the present order of things in the household.

MARJORIE—Thank you, Pa-pa!—(*Caner starts towards L. U.D. Blodgett is rearranging the furniture as it stood originally*).

MARJORIE—(*Brightening up, as an idea strikes her*)—Pa-pa! I can have anything I want?

CANER—(*Turning at L.U.D.*)—Anything within reason—(*Emphatically*)—So long as you do not move the furniture.

MARJORIE—Not one—little footstool?

CANER—Not one!—(*Caner exits L.U.D. Blodgett is finishing the readjustment of the furniture*).

MARJORIE—(*Clasping her hands happily, smiling*)—Blodgett. You heard what my father said? I am to have whatever I want.

BLODGETT—Yes, Miss.

MARJORIE—(*Looking about the room, speaking with spirit*)—Now! . . . I want you to get me some flowers—orchids and roses and tiger-lilies and jonquils and yellow chrysanthemums—thousands of them! Order them the first thing in the morning—I shall die if I don't cheer this place up!—(*Turns L. and takes a position on the rug in front of the fireplace*).

BLODGETT—Is that all, Miss?

MARJORIE—No. Are there any pets in this house?

BLODGETT—(*Scandalized*)—Pets?

MARJORIE—Yes—animals! Birds! Fishes!

BLODGETT—No, indeed, Miss!

MARJORIE—Not even one little puppy-dog?

BLODGETT—No, Miss.

MARJORIE—Surely the cook has a cat!

BLODGETT—(*Stiffly*)—The cook is a chef, Miss.

MARJORIE—Can't a chef have a cat?

BLODGETT—Not here! Your father won't have anything like that in the house!

MARJORIE—It's time he did! No wonder it's so silent and cold and forlorn.

BLODGETT—Is that all, Miss?

MARJORIE—No! I want you to get me a dog—any kind of a dog, an Angora cat, a dozen canary birds, an aquarium of gold fish and two or three pairs of squirrels!—(*Bell buzzes in hall*).

BLODGETT—(*Scandalized*)—I wouldn't dare, Miss!

MARJORIE—Then I'll order them myself.

BLODGETT—Thank you, Miss.

MARJORIE—At the same time I must have at least fifty sofa pillows.

BLODGETT—Is that all, Miss?

MARJORIE—All that I can think of just now. You may go.—(*Blodgett bows stiffly and exits C.E. to R. Marjorie goes up stage L. of C.E. and pulls the small table with the jar away from the wall. Then she surveys it with satisfaction. Now she goes to the music stand, above the piano and lays hold of it as though to move it. Blodgett re-enters C.E. from R. carrying salver with card on it. Offers salver to Marjorie. She is puzzled, picks up card, reads it with surprise*).

MARJORIE—Ask Mr. Nicolls to come in.—(*Blodgett exits C.E. to R. Marjorie turns down stage below piano, looking at card*).

WALTER NICOLLS enters C.E. He is a tall young man, commonplace as to appearance, thick-skinned, sure of himself, rather conceited. He wears one of those foolish-looking little moustaches with waxed ends. He is dressed in a smart Tuxedo suit).

WALTER—(*Looking about, then seeing Marjorie and starting towards her R. speaking cheerily, as one sure of his welcome*).—Hello, Marjorie! Heard you were arriving to-night. Thought you wouldn't mind my dropping in for a moment—took a chance on catching you alone.—(*Holds out his hand*).

MARJORIE—(*Giving him her hand, cordially*)—I wasn't expecting you—so soon, but I'm glad you came. Pa-pa is having some of his old cronies to dinner—to meet me, or I'd ask you to stay.

WALTER—Thanks just the same—couldn't possibly do it—got a dinner engagement myself—stage affair at the Knickerbocker—taxi waiting. Now then—(*Waves her to settee below piano R.C.*)—The fact is—I couldn't wait—had to come.—(*Marjorie sits*)—I've got something for you—(*Sits beside her; takes small box from vest pocket*)—I'm sure you'll like it—sort of combination of Christmas present and—well, you'll see!—(*Opens box and takes out a showy, white satin case*)—Selected that case with a great deal of care. Tiffany's—that's where I got it—wouldn't think of going anywhere else for a thing like this—(*Places it in her hand*)—Press the spring, and—

MARJORIE—(*Uncertainly*)—But, Walter—I——

WALTER—(*Rubbing his hands, grinning with satisfaction*)—Press the spring, press the spring!—(*Marjorie presses the spring, the lid flies open and discloses a small solitaire diamond ring*)—Ah! There you are!—(*Marjorie look at it in surprise*)—Not a large, vulgar diamond—but fine, very fine. I knew you wouldn't care about the size.

MARJORIE—It is pretty—very pretty, Walter; but we—we hadn't said anything about a—a ring!

WALTER—N——o! But you got my letter? I sent it here.

MARJORIE—(*Her hand going instinctively up to her breast*)—Yes! Only I haven't had time to make up my mind as to how I should answer it!

WALTER—Don't bother about that! I'll make up your mind for you!—(*Takes ring from case*)—Here's the ring. Now, where's the finger?

MARJORIE—(*Putting her left hand behind her, smiling*)—You mustn't be in such a hurry!—(*Then soberly*)—We've never talked about any subject so—so serious as this!

WALTER—You'd never let me! You had a way of putting me off—told me we didn't know each other well enough. But since last summer, I've done a lot of thinking about you—and remembering how very friendly and so on we were— I made up my mind, when I heard that you were coming home. And well, Marjorie, the time has come—hasn't it—when there should be something definite?

MARJORIE—I suppose you're right, Walter; and that is a very definite little ring.

WALTER—Here, let me put it on your finger and we'll be definitely engaged.

MARJORIE—(*Still holding hand behind her*)—And then what?

WALTER—Why, we'll be married, of course—just as soon as—as you wish. I suppose your father will have something to say about that.

MARJORIE—I don't know what he'll say at first—but in the end, he'll let me do whatever I want.

WALTER—Good! That's settled! When shall we be married?

MARJORIE—Before I answer that—so long as I'm taking all the responsibility for you—I hope you won't mind if I ask you a few questions.

WALTER—(*Quickly*)—Oh, I'm all right—perfectly healthy—play a lot of golf and tennis and so on—weather permitting; and through the winter I'm dancing all the time—keeps me in fine condition.

MARJORIE—You look well. But what I was going to ask is: how would you take care of me—after we were married?

WALTER—I'll take splendid care of you—never let you go without your furs when it was cold—and—and when you weren't feeling fit—I'd bring you flowers and candy and so on.

MARJORIE—(*With a smile*)—Yes, yes., I'm sure you'd do all that. But——

WALTER—(*Interrupting her*)—That's nothing. I'll take you around everywhere—dinners—d—ances! I'll show you what living is. We'll entertain a lot. Very formally—footman, all dolled

up, behind every chair. Informally—that's where I come in—cabaret. We'll have the Castles. They come high—but I can get them—know them myself. And, of course, we'll have a car or two—a big blue limousine with my crest on it—and one of those low, sporty ones to tour in. And we've got to have a town and a country house—on an island! That's where we'll put our country house. I know the very island we want. That means a yacht. And whenever we get bored stiff here, I'll just up and take you abroad. We might go to Japan, now the continent's in such a mess.

MARJORIE—You must have a very large income.

WALTER—(*Startled*)—What?

MARJORIE—I say, you must have a very large income.

WALTER—I? My dear Marjorie, my income is so slender I often wonder how it supports me.

MARJORIE—Wouldn't it be enough to support me, too?

WALTER—Never in the world.

MARJORIE—I could be very economical.

WALTER—Economical? Oh, that's so vulgar.

MARJORIE—(*With enthusiasm*)—Oh, I see—you're going to work.

WALTER—Work? I—I've never had to.

MARJORIE—What could you do, I wonder?—(*Walter wonders*)—Have you no talents?

WALTER—Oh, yes. When I was a kid I used to draw things, you know—awfully clever and all that, but I didn't keep it up—and I've got a great ear for music—whistle—play the drum—(*Drumming in pantomime*)—The kettle drum. I can play any old thing on the drum. Makes it awfully jolly—with the pianola—or the victrola—(*Marjorie breaks into a little laugh*)—What are you laughing at?

MARJORIE—You're so practical—I think that's why I've liked you. . . . Tell me, what is the best thing you can do?

WALTER—Dance! I'm a ripping good dancer. Only I shouldn't like to do it professionally—and you wouldn't like to have me—would you?

MARJORIE—No. So I'm afraid we couldn't depend upon any of your—talents.

WALTER—I'm afraid not.

MARJORIE—That brings us down to your really WORKING for me.

WALTER—Is—is that necessary?

MARJORIE—(*A little impatiently*)—Surely it is!

WALTER—(*Surprised*)—You want me to go into business?

MARJORIE—Why not? You could. Men do.

WALTER—But I haven't any leanings that way. If I—I got a job, I'd be fired the first week. Besides, it wouldn't agree with me.

MARJORIE—(*Wearily*)—It was only my suggestion. I don't know—perhaps you have a better idea.—(*There is a pause*).

WALTER—(*Coughs*)—Eh—I—I rather thought that—that your father—might sort of—you know!—set us up to begin with—and—and—(*Winding up with an expansive gesture*).

MARJORIE—Oh! that was your idea!

WALTER—Isn't it the natural idea? You're his only child, aren't you?

MARJORIE—Yes. So you think it's certain that some day he'll leave me all his money?

WALTER—(*Anxiously*)—Don't you think he will?

MARJORIE—I've never asked him.

WALTER—I shouldn't think you'd need to. Even if he went a bit dotty in his old age, and went in for boosting charity and all that sort of thing, you'd be bound to come in for all we—I mean all you'd need.—(*Pause. He waits for her to speak. She remains silent*)—Eh—only last month, your father paid half a million for some musty old painting about so big.—(*Illustrates a three-foot canvas*)—If he can afford to do that, I should think he'd be willing to do something pretty nifty for you—when you—eh—marry, if you put it up to him in the right way.

MARJORIE—(*Looking steadily at Walter*)—I couldn't do it.

WALTER—I own he's an uncomfortable old bird to approach, but you could get 'round him—a girl always can.

MARJORIE—(*Firmly*)—But I wouldn't.

WALTER—(*Surprised*)—You wouldn't?

MARJORIE—No. I'm afraid I have too much pride to ask my father to support the man I marry.

WALTER—(*Taken aback*)—I wasn't suggesting that he support me. Oh, no—just that he give you a start, until—until—(*Finishes with a vague gesture*).

MARJORIE—(*Shaking her head, disappointedly*)—Oh, Walter.—(*She shuts ring in the case and hands case to him*).

WALTER—(*Tentatively, taking case*)—I didn't get this for myself, you know—I got it for you.

MARJORIE—(*Rising coldly*)—I'm very much obliged, but I can't keep it—I can't.

WALTER—(*Rising*)—Just because I thought your father might——

MARJORIE—Please—don't go all over that again.

WALTER—(*Angrily*)—I can't for the life of me see—

MARJORIE—No. You can't. . . . Good-bye.—(*Holds out her hand*).

WALTER—(*Twirling box in his hand, ignoring hers angrily*)—Marjorie, you'll be sorry for treating me like this.

MARJORIE—I AM sorry—sorry that you are not different.

WALTER—But you liked me a great deal—when we were fussing around in Nice.

MARJORIE—I liked you then because I thought you were the kind of a man that I would always want to have—near me.

WALTER—I may not be exactly what you think you want, but I'm a whole lot above the average—and it doesn't do for a girl to be too particular these days—when men are getting mighty scarce.

MARJORIE—(*Holding out her hand again*)—Good-bye, Walter.

WALTER—(*Putting ring in his pocket*)—Oh no! We won't say "good-bye" yet. Think it over. I won't call it off. I'll give you what your father would call—an option on me—for one—kiss.—(*Advances to her*).

MARJORIE—(*Holding him off*)—No! Thank you, just the same.

WALTER—(*Persisting*)—Never mind the option.

MARJORIE—(*Retreating from him to davenport with a tone of finality*)—Good-bye.

WALTER—Oh, well, you've got my address. If I don't hear from you within a week or so, I'll drop 'round!—(*With emphasis*)—Au revoir.—(*Walter exits C.E. to R. Bell buzzes in hallway. Blodgett presently crosses in hallway from L. to R. Marjorie stands L.C., looking after Walter for a moment. Then she turns slowly, dejectedly to the davenport, takes letter from her breast, looks at it with a sigh, goes to fireplace, hunts for match-box, finds ornamental box of matches. Blodgett appears at C.E. from R.*)

BLODGETT—(*Announcing*)—Mr. Sewall.—(*Marjorie puts down box of matches, and quickly restores letter to her breast. Enter ALBERT SEWALL, C.E. He is a large man, inclined to stoutness, middle-aged, energetic, hearty, jolly, with a big laugh, a little rough*

in manner, a Bohemian, but not at all common. He wears evening dress, with a "tango" shirt. Marjorie turns as he enters. Blodgett withdraws from C.E. to L. in hallway.

SEWALL—(*Coming down C. and holding out his hands*)—Ahhh! You're Marjorie I feel it—I know it! You are! God bless you!

MARJORIE—(*Taking his hand, smiling*)—Yes, I'm Marjorie! Am I supposed to know you?

SEWALL—(*Holding her hand in both of his*)—Naturally. Everybody knows me. I'm Sewall—Albert Sewall—Old Papa Sewall.

MARJORIE—Oh, you're the great Sewall?—(*Sewall laughs heartily*)—You ARE! I adore your music. I heard your opera in Paris—"The Order of the Rose." It was very, very BEAUTIFUL.

SEWALL—Don't—don't—my dear—talk like a young ladies' seminary! No—no—you have more character—more flair. Permit me.—(*Feels her head*)—I thought so—you have the bump of music. We shall be friends. Good. Now, look me straight in the eye: What is the best part of my opera that you say is so—"beau-ti-ful?" —(*Imitating her. Marjorie darts to the piano and plays a few bars from "Tristan and Isolde." He listens with delight; then breaks in with enthusiasm*)—Aaah! Come her, my child! (*Marjorie rises from piano. He scoops her up in an embrace*)—Marvellous—you're marvellous! Those fool critics—they had to admit that Old Papa Sewall could write serious music—but they did not know what was best—only you and Waldseemiller, of Munich, knew!

MARJORIE—(*Pleased*)—But I liked all of it. Oh, that lovely introduction to the second act—the dance in the third—it carried me off my feet.

SEWALL—Naturally. I had a book—a libretto—that inspired me. Oh, my God—a book! A book! A book! That's what I want —a book. I can write symphonies out of my head, waltzes out of my fingers—but an opera? I must have a book. If the book is bad —the music is no good. If the book is good—the music—that will be superb. I will guarantee that. But where am I to get a book that is worth a note—these days?

MARJORIE—I wish I could get you a book.

SEWALL—I would give you $10,000 for a GOOD book.

MARJORIE—Is that very much?

SEWALL—It is a fabulous price—to pay in advance on royalties. Yes—we are so desperate—that is what we have done. My managers. They have offered a prize of $10,000 for a book. I tell them—that will bring the genius out of his garret.

MARJORIE—Oooooh! That's where they come from—isn't it?

SEWALL—Surely. That's where they grow—in garrets—when it's cold.

MARJORIE—But there's always a little flame—inside of them—that keeps them warm. Perhaps some genius will send you an opera book for a Christmas present.

SEWALL—Pray for me, little lady. . . . By-the-by, I've got a Christmas present for you. A wee bit of a song.—(*Takes a small roll of manuscript from his pocket and hands it to her.*)

MARJORIE—(*Delighted*)—You're a dear.

SEWALL—Written by my dear old self—and just for you!

MARJORIE—(*With a glance at the script*)—This is a darling Christmas present.

SEWALL—Read the verse.

MARJORIE—(*Reads the verse*)

"My Song,
The cheering of the people rings
'Round poets, master-minds and kings!
Their sweeping deeds, their feathered words,
Fame sweeping hte whole world girds!
But let my praise mount high for one,
Who has no fame for great deeds done,
He spins no song, he rears no dome!
Out of his heart, he builds a home!
He weaves no book, no measured thing,
A woman's joy his harvesting!
Healer he of a woman's scars—
God's hand shall shrine his name in stars."

(*When she finishes, she looks up at Sewall, slowly with the tenderest sort of smile, holding the script to her breast*)—I love that.

SEWALL—I knew you would!—(*Marjorie nods, holding script close to her breast*)—Prodigious little idea—heigh?

MARJORIE—(*Nods, then touches him gently*)—You're—you're wonderful!

SEWALL—Oh, I didn't write the verse.

MARJORIE—No? Who did write it?

SEWALL—Blessed if I know. Read it in a newspaper—tore it out—Just like me—left the author's name behind me.

MARJORIE—I'd like to know the man who wrote that song.—(*Looks at script*).

SEWALL—(*Taking script from her and going toward piano R.C.*)—Come—now! I'll play it—you sing it.

MARJORIE—(*Following Sewall to the piano*)—But I don't sing.

SEWALL—You'll sing this, young lady.—(*Sits at piano*)—It's as easy as—kissing!—(*Plays the introduction. Marjorie stands beside him*)—The introduction! Now the song begins. I'll play it through for you first!—(*Plays the song. When he finishes, he turns to Marjorie expectantly*).

MARJORIE—(*Touching him*)—I love that, too.

SEWALL—Naturally! Now! Fill your little lungs, open your little mouth, and sing your little head off.—(*Plays introduction. Marjorie takes a very deep breath and holds it. Sewall looks about at her.*)—I said—fill your lungs—not stuff them.—(*Marjorie lets go her breath, laughing*)—You know how to breathe, don't you?

MARJORIE—Of course; but I—I can't sing—for you.

SEWALL—Is there anyone in particular that you can sing for?

MARJORIE—Myself.

SEWALL—Very well, young lady—sing for Marjorie.

MARJORIE—But you'll listen!

SEWALL—I? The accompanist never listens.—(*Striking the opening chords*)—Now! Begin!—(*Singing*)

"The cheering of the people rings

MARJORIE—(*Picking up the song, singing at first timidly and then with more freedom and finally with feeling*).

"'Round poets, master-minds and kings,
Their sweeping deeds, their feathered words,
Fame gathering, the whole world girds!
But let my praise mount high for one,
Who has no fame for great deeds done,
He spins no song, he rears no dome!
Out of his heart, he builds a home!
He weaves no book, no measured thing,
A woman's joy his harvesting!
Healer he of a woman's scars—
God's hand shall shrine his name in stars."

(*When she finishes, she stands motionless for a moment at the piano, under the spell of the song. Sewall watches her with a faint smile. She turns to him, holding out a hand to him*)—Thank you for the song—I like it better than any Christmas present I can imagine. It's going to help to keep me from—from being lonely.

SEWALL—(*With an incredulous, jolly laugh*)—Lonely? You—lonely?

MARJORIE—A little—sometimes.

SEWALL—What? With all of us?—your father's old friends? —(*She looks up at him and laughs a little*)—Now—what are you laughing about? Spill it out.

MARJORIE—With so—so many ELDERLY friends—I'm beginning to feel like the matron of an old man's home. (*Sewall laughs heartily. Blodgett appears at C.E. from L.*)—What is it, Blodgett?

BLODGETT—Your father, Miss—sent me to tell Mr. Sewall that his cocktail is getting warm.

SEWALL—(*Starting up from the piano suddenly*)—Ah! What a calamity! You'll excuse me, Marjorie—or those young dogs will be drinking themselves to death!—(*Sewall exits C.E. to L., followed by Blodgett. Marjorie stands at piano, looking at the song for a moment. Then she turns C. with a sigh; slowly takes letter from her breast, goes to fireplace; takes box of matches, sinks down on rug in front of fireplace, reads letter, strikes match and lights letter —crying softly as she does so; and places letter in fireplace. She sits there, huddled on the rug, watching the letter burn and crying softly. ROMNEY appears at L.U.E. He watches her for an instant and then comes softly down to R. end of davenport*).

MARJORIE—(*Feeling his presence, turning her head, without rising, starting as she sees him, speaking with a little catch in her voice*)—Romney. W—where did you come from?

ROMNEY—(*Quietly, whimsically*)—I was summoned to you by the spirit of that cremated—love-letter.

MARJORIE—(*Surprised, still crying a little*)—L-love-letter?

ROMNEY—It's only love-letters that one burns and cries over.

MARJORIE—I'm—not—crying.

ROMNEY—I beg your pardon.

MARJORIE—At least—not about him.

ROMNEY—Oh!

MARJORIE—He was awfully nice—and funny—but—(*Dabbing at her eyes*).

ROMNEY—He didn't measure up to standard.

MARJORIE—(*Nods, cries*)—So—you—see—I wasn't—crying for him. It was my first—my only—l-love letter.

ROMNEY—But it won't be your last.

MARJORIE—Oh, yes it will. My—my heart is—is frost-bitten.

ROMNEY—If that were so—you should be crying little icicles; but I'm sure they are warm little tears. Have a larger handkerchief. —(*Romney whips handkerchief from his pocket and squatting near her hands it to her.*)

MARJORIE—Thank you.—(*Mops her eyes*)—I can talk to you, Romney.—I was never quite sure about Walter. Now I know that

I didn't—I-love him.—(*Puts out her hands to Romney. He helps her rise*).

ROMNEY—You only wanted someone to love. I'll get you a white rabbit with pink eyes. I understand they are quite affectionate.

MARJORIE—I want SOMEONE—not SOMETHING.

ROMNEY—But a tame rabbit, or even a well-behaved bull-pup, is much less trouble than a man.

MARJORIE—(*Returning his handkerchief*)—I am going to order my own menagerie tomorrow; but that's not what I want now.

ROMNEY—Whatever you want, I'll get it for you. Have you any definite ideas on the subject.

MARJORIE—I hadn't until tonight.—(*Suddenly*)—Oh, I must show you.—(*Starts across stage to piano*)—Mr. Sewall brought me a song.

ROMNEY—(*Following her*)—I thought I heard you singing.

MARJORIE—(*Picking up song from piano*)—Such a dear song—he wrote the music himself—for me—for Christmas. But the words—the verse—he doesn't know who wrote them. They're about the most wonderful kind of man. Only I'm afraid he doesn't exist! . . . See!—(*Hands song to Romney. They are at the piano*).

ROMNEY—(*With a patronizing but sympathetic smile, takes the song, glances at it, purses his brows suddenly, gives a subdued exclamation of surprise*).—Huh!—(*Glances over song*).

MARJORIE—Isn't it too adorable?

ROMNEY—I've always liked it!—(*Marjorie looks at him, puzzled*).—I know the chap who wrote it!

MARJORIE—(*Surprised, excited*)—Oh—if he should be a—a friend of yours!

ROMNEY—He—he was!—(*Preoccupied*)—Gad! It's the strangest thing—his song falling into your hands! . . . Come here.—(*Leads Marjorie to the windows R., parts curtains and points out down stage*)—You see this dreadful old house next door?

MARJORIE—Is that the one you wrote me about—where they keep boarders, or lodgers, or something, just to annoy Pa-pa because he wouldn't pay a ridiculous price for it?

ROMNEY—Yes. In that shabby rookery—there's where Quintard lives.

MARJORIE—Quintard?

ROMNEY—The lad who wrote your song—lives up there—like Cinderella, in the attic.—(*Placing Marjorie close to the window*)—The gable touches our roof. You can see the light from his dormer

window.—(*Marjorie stands against the window, looking upward*)—It's cold and forlorn and lonely up there.

MARJORIE—(After a pause)—A Cinderella-man.—(Romney *leaves Marjorie at the window, goes to piano, sets up song, and begins to play it softly. Marjorie turns slowly from the window to the R. side of the piano*).—Romney!—(*He stops playing*)—Why does he live up there? Is he so dreadfully poor?

ROMNEY—So poor—that I don't think he gets enough to eat.

MARJORIE—Oh, Romney! Why don't you do something for him?

ROMNEY—He won't let me. Young idiot won't take a penny. You never knew anyone so proud as Tony. Once—I offered him a little loan: he bristled up like a porcupine. I've had an awful row with him—just because I paid his landlady a month's rent without his knowing it. It was only a few dollars, but when he heard of it—he sent the money back to me, like a shot—with thanks. That was some weeks ago. I haven't dared to visit him since.

MARJORIE—But hasn't he any family?

ROMNEY—Not even a cat. He did have a rich old uncle—miserable old cuss—wanted Tony to help him manufacture talcum powder—Tony refused—he wanted to write things. The old scoundrel cut Tony out of his will—and died.

MARJORIE—The beast.

ROMNEY—Yes. Uncle was a throw-back—the only Quintard I didn't like. Gentle folks—dear people. Tony's one of the best of them. And he's nothing but a boy.

MARJORIE—(*Warmly*)—You were horrid to quarrel with him.

ROMNEY—I didn't quarrel with him—he quarrelled with me.

MARJORIE—It was your fault. You—you weren't tactful—and you must be very—oh ever so very tactful with anyone so poor and sensitive and—and lonely.

ROMNEY—But he was so silly about it—such a jackass.

MARJORIE—(*Warmly*)—He's not a jackass.

ROMNEY—You don't know him. Why, he absolutely disappeared after his uncle's death—hid himself, like a mole. For over a year I didn't know what had become of him. Then I saw this poem, signed by him, in a magazine. The editor gave me his address.

MARJORIE—(*Warmly*)—Why didn't you make the editor buy a whole lot of his poems?

ROMNEY—If I'd suggested it the editor would probably have kicked me out of his office.

MARJORIE—He's a gentleman—isn't he?

ROMNEY—The editor?

MARJORIE—No—the Cinderella-man.

ROMNEY—To the tips of his fingers.

MARJORIE—Then I shall invite him to dinner.

ROMNEY—Charming thought, but he won't accept.

MARJORIE—Why won't he?

ROMNEY—He refused an invitation from me, an old friend. Do you imagine he'll accept one from a stranger?

MARJORIE—(*Regretfully*)—No—o! He wouldn't. I must think of something else.

ROMNEY—I'd like to do something for him—well, for Christmas, you know.

MARJORIE—(*Heart-stricken*)—Oh, Romney—Christmas! Pa-pa will load me with presents—all sorts of things—that'll cost a lot of money—and that I won't care for. And there's that poor, lonely, little Cinderella-man up there. He'll have nothing. Romney, I can't stand it—I can't stand it.

ROMNEY—I'm glad you can't. It will give you something new and vital to think about—someone who must feel lonelier than you do. You may even think of a way to help him.

MARJORIE—I must. I will.—(*Goes to window, looks up at house next door. Romney plays a few bars of the song*)—Romney! I want you to go to him tomorrow—make up with him—find out what he needs most. Don't ask him. Look around and see for yourself. Then come back immediately and tell me.

ROMNEY—What's stirring in that funny little head of yours?

MARJORIE—(*Happily, excitedly, coming back to piano*)—I've thought of a way of giving him a Christmas. Oh, Romney! I'll do it—I will do it! Promise me that you'll go—promise me.—(*Caner, Thayer and Sewall appear at C.E. standing in a row*).

ROMNEY—I promise.

CANER—Are you two coming to dinner?

SEWALL—Must the old men's home dine without its patron?

THAYER—Our hearts are on your plate, Mademoiselle.

ROMNEY—I see, I've missed the second round of cocktails. We're coming.—(*Caner, Thayer and Sewall turn from C.E. and disappear through hallway to L.*)

MARJORIE—(To Romney)—Go on—there's a dear. (Romney looks at her curiously, puzzled, then with a little bow, he turns from the piano and exits C.E. to L. Marjorie goes slowly to the window.

parts the curtains, looks upward in silence for a minute, with an *expression of great tenderness as she repeats softly and with deep feeling the following lines of the song*)—

"He spins no song, he rears no dome,
Out of his heart he builds a home!"

(*She stands there with a suspicion of tears in her eyes as the curtain falls slowly*).

CURTAIN.

ACT II

(The Afternoon of the Next Day.)

SCENE:

The attic of the house next door to Caner's. The ceiling of the attic is low and slopes down to a broad double dormer at the back. The window needs washing. Through the window one sees roofs, gables, chimneys, a tall church spire above a "rose" window, a clock tower. There is snow over everything, and the light outside is the cold blue light of a winter's afternoon. The interior of the attic and all the furnishings are shabby and forlorn. The rough beams and unplastered walls are exposed. The only entrance is on the L. through an open trap which is railed in up stage and on the side. Thus entrances and exits are made midway down stage on the L. An old kitchen table stands up stage just to the R. of C. in the light of the window. A broken scrap-basket under the table. A trunk is pushed against the middle of the rail L. Above the trap and against the L. wall, a high shelf, from which hangs an old calico curtain. In the centre of the stage a heat register is sunk in the middle of the floor R. and midway down stage, hangs an old "Gloucester" hammock, made up as a bed and covered with an old grey army blanket. Against the wall R. below the hammock, a wash-stand with pitcher and basin, soap, and a glass holding tooth and nail brushes; a razor and a towel. Mirror over wash-stand. A shoe by the register, another down R.C. Hat on floor L., overcoat on trunk.

ANTHONY QUINTARD is discovered writing at the table, occupying the only chair in the attic. He is a young man, slender, not tall, but well-made. He wears a well-cut but shabby sack-suit, a white shirt with soft collar attached, a bright-colored old four-in-hand scarf, a sweater under his coat, a pair of dilapidated Turkish slippers. For all his poverty he is cheerful, possesses a jolly sense of humor. The table before him is covered with the sheets of the manuscript upon which he is working; a bottle of ink, a blotter, a box of matches, a pipe, a can of tobacco. He is not getting on well with his work. He mechanically fills his pipe and tries to light it with a burnt match. He smiles at his mistakes, takes match from box and lights pipe. He starts to write again, stops in a moment, shivers. It is cold, very cold. He rises and goes C. to interview the register. It is plain that if there is any heat ascending it is a ridicu-

lously inadequate amount. He ponders. A cheerful idea strikes him. He goes to the shelf in the L. upper corner, parts the calico curtain, and fetches down an old Persian-looking dressing-gown. He puts it on with great satisfaction. Then he takes an old turban from the shelf and puts it on with equal satisfaction. He returns to the table to work, but inspiration fails him. He rises, paces the stage, goes to the window, rubs the frost off the pane, looks out. He stands there for a moment. An inspiration comes to him. He hurriedly turns to table and begins to write at a great rate. Presently a knock is heard from below on the L. Tony pays no attention. The knock is repeated).

TONY—(*Without looking up, growling*)—Go away!

PRIMROSE—(*From below L.*)—It's most important, sir.

TONY—(*Impatiently*)—Nothing's important—except my work! —(*More impatiently*)—Confound you—I had just got a wireless from inspiration—and you break in—Now you've roused my curiosity—So—come up and annoy me.—(*The head and shoulders of PRIMROSE appear above the trap L. He is a short, thick-set bibulous-looking old servant, shabbily dressed. In his day he has been an exceedingly well-trained servant, and still retains the airs and manners of such a one*).

PRIMROSE—(*In a husky voice, most apologetic*)—I beg pardon, Mr. Quintard, for botherin' you—but—

TONY—Don't stand there like a bear in a pit.

PRIMROSE—Thank you, sir.—(*He comes up to the top step and leans wearily over the rail*)—I wouldn't have thought of botherin' you——

TONY—(*Cheerfully*)—Eliminate the preface, Primrose, and unwind your tale.

PRIMROSE—Well, sir—he's waitin' below—a gentleman.

TONY—You're quite sure he's a gentleman?

PRIMROSE—Oh, yes, sir. He has on a fur coat.

TONY—Ah! Could you—eh—get me the coat and leave the gentleman?

PRIMROSE—I'm afraid not, sir. The gentleman is wearing the coat.

TONY—He knew where he was coming. Is it Cooke or Peary?

PRIMROSE—I couldn't say, sir. He came in a motor car with a swell chauffeur—he was wearin' a fur coat too. (*With the instinct of a good servant, he comes up on the stage and picks up the shoe down R. Then picks up shoe by register, and hands pair of shoes to Tony, who takes off slippers and gives them to Primrose. Primrose places slippers in L.U. corner*).

TONY—(*Putting on shoes*)—Then how did you know which was the gentleman?

PRIMROSE—The gentleman wears his fur inside—the chauffeur outside. You wore yours inside, sir.—(*He shakes his head sadly, chokes back a sob, picks up shabby overcoat from trunk, shakes it and brushes it down carefully with his hand, and hangs it up in L.U. corner*).

TONY—(*Rising*)—Don't mention it. It's a well-known economic fact, Primrose, that you can't wear your fur coat and eat it too. But what's your opinon about our fur-lined visitors?

PRIMROSE—(*Picking up hat from below trunk and placing it on shelf in upper L. corner*)—I think it would be safe to let him up, sir.

TONY—(*Comes down C. to register*)—I'll take your word for it. Show him up.

PRIMROSE—(*Starting down L.*)—Yes, sir.

TONY—(*Holding hand over register*)—I could do with a whiff of heat. Suppose you go down to the uttermost depths of this habitation and sneak a spoonful of anthracite into the furnace. But don't let the great She-Bear catch you—she might raise my rent.

PRIMROSE—So she might, sir. Thank you, sir.—(*Primrose exits. Tony takes off his Persian robe and is about to fling it on the trunk, when he remembers to be tidy, and hangs it up under the curtain, L.U. corner, and places turban on shelf. Romney Evans comes up through the trap, carrying a derby hat and stick, wearing a fur coat and chamois gloves; cutaway coat and striped trousers under overcoat.*)

TONY—(*Cordially coming down L. and offering his hand*)—Hello, Romney!

ROMNEY—(*Pleased at his greeting*)—Hello, Tony! (*They shake hands warmly*).

TONY——My apologies for keeping you waiting—I didn't know it was you.

ROMNEY—My fault—I should have sent up my name—only I was afraid you—you wouldn't see me.

TONY—Nonsense! We understand each other—now. Awfully good of you to come again. Your hat.—(*Takes his hat and stick*)—I'd ask you to take off your coat——but I'm afraid you're not used to these high altitudes.—(*Places hat on pitcher on wash-stand R. and lays cane across basin*).

ROMNEY—It is rather like out-of-doors up here.

TONY—Ah, you notice that—the effect! Good! Some people like to sleep out-of-doors. I like to work out-of-doors; but that isn't

practical at this season of the year—so I manage to have it cool up here—keeps my brain active—(*Looks at an old thermometer with an advertisement on it hung on wall by wash-stand*)—No! It's all right! —(*Turns C. and holds hand over register*)—I was afraid my man would make it too hot for me. He has a passion for heat.—(*Picks up chair from his table and brings it down L.C.*)—Have the chair—it's still fairly warm.

ROMNEY—(*Sitting and taking out a gold cigarette case*)—Have a cigarette?

TONY—(*With relish, taking one*)—Thanks—(*Getting match from table*)—Haven't smoked a cigarette in days—have to smoke a pipe when I'm working.—(*Strikes match and lights Romney's cigarette, and then very carefully lights his own with the same match. Tony sits on trunk L.*)

ROMNEY.—By the way, I have a friend—a neighbor of yours—who's taken a sudden interest in your work—quite smitten with that verse of yours, "My Song."

TONY—Neighbor? Perhaps I know him by sight.

ROMNEY—It isn't a he—it's a she.

TONY—Ah! Enter romance—very early in the first chapter. Now don't spoil it by giving me facts. Let me improvise. It's the Veiled Princess.

ROMNEY—Who's the Veiled Princess?

TONY—The little billionairess—she arrived next door—last night in the gloaming.

ROMNEY—So you've heard about her.

TONY—My journal brings me the fashionable news of the street.

ROMNEY—Your journal?

TONY—Primrose—my man—you noticed him? He's my journal—my court gazette—morning and evening—and occasionally an extra-most reliable. Serves me in the dual capacity of journal and valet, whether I will have it or not. His real business in life is butling and janitoring for the Great She-Bear. You noticed her too—the last time you were here—I'm deathly afraid of her. I try to keep my door locked. She's likely to come in and eat me some night just because I've forgotten to pay the rent.

ROMNEY—But you were talking of the Veiled Princess——

TONY—Oh, yes. My journal informs me that she arrived last night in her gasoline chariot—heavily veiled—that she is the only daughter of the king of commerce next door——

ROMNEY—Wouldn't you like to meet her?

TONY—Got her in your pocket?

ROMNEY—Not—today.

TONY—Too bad. But, after all—what have I to do with veiled princesses?

ROMNEY—Nothing! .That's the trouble. You write about them—probably in the most intimate sort of way—but you don't know them. Think how much better you could write about them if you knew—just one.

TONY—You're mistaken, my dear Romney. I can't imagine them much better than they are. Once upon a time, in my days of affluent slavery, I knew a princess—I had to entertain her for almost an hour—it makes me ache to think of it.

ROMNEY—But you forgot—the Veiled Princess likes your song.

TONY—You're a sly old dog—but I'm impervious to flattery.

ROMNEY—But when a charming young woman expresses a desire to meet you——

TONY—The only safe procedure is to scurry up to the turret of your castle and bolt the door after you.

ROMNEY—You mustn't think that she's the sort that would run after you. No, indeed.

TONY—Thank heaven! I'm saved!

ROMNEY—But I should think that when you're told that there is a young person next door who appreciates and is interested in your work, you'd be only too glad to have a chance to meet her.

TONY—I'm sure it's very friendly and delightful of you and the Veiled Princess to think of me—I am flattered—and I hope that you will convey my sincere thanks to her—but, having forgotten my party manners and having mislaid my party clothes, I most regretfully and respectfuly decline your cordial invitation. With the compliments of the season, I remain, your obedient servant, Anthony Quintard.

ROMNEY—(*Rising, stalking about the attic, looking at everything with the intention of remembering details*)—Tony, you're a jackass.

TONY—The very word of my late, but not lamented, uncle.

ROMNEY—What's the use of your freezing to death in this miserable garret——

TONY—(*Cheerfully*)—But I'm not freezing to death—I'm doing a most important piece of work—or I was, until you so politely interrupted me.

ROMNEY—I doubt its importance.

TONY—(*Gaily*)—Oh, say not so—say not so.

ROMNEY—You could be living, comfortable, respectably——

TONY—Respectably! Why this is the most moral lodgery in New York. The great She-bear is a Puritan of the most violent type. She cast out a perfectly good typist from the floor below because her alleged brother called on a Saturday evening.

ROMNEY—You know what I mean. You should and could be living among people of your own kind, if you would only accept a certain position that I have waiting for you——

TONY—In a pickle factory. Thank you—but no.

ROMNEY—In a broker's office—at a good salary——

TONY—(*Going to register, and trying to warm himself*)—I wouldn't take it at any price—I had that out with you once—don't let us start cussing each other again. You can't convince me any more than I can make you understand that I must do the thing that's in me to do—without compromise. Otherwise I'm a failure.

ROMNEY—(*Pacing up and down R.*)—I can't see that you're making much of a success as it is.

TONY—(*Hurt*)—No——o!— (*Recovering himself, warmly*)—But I'm not a failure yet—and I won't be. It would take more than your say so—to shake my faith in myself.—(*Turns up to dormer window*).

ROMNEY—(*Picks up hat and stick from wash-stand; goes up to Tony, laying his hand on Tony's shoulder*)—I'm sorry, Tony. I didn't come up here to hurt you. I thought that perhaps I could be the means of bringing a new friend into your life—the Veiled Princess. She's a dear thing. I even hoped that you two might—might grow to care for each other—(*Tony wheels about, and looks at Romney with amazement*)—Yes! And why not? You're the only man I know that's good enough for her.

TONY—(*Sincerely*)—It's very decent of you, Romney, to say that.—(*Strongly*)—But you know I have the utmost contempt for the sort of men who marry rich girls—it's a kind of prostitution—that's what it is. Your self-respect for a—meal-ticket.

ROMNEY—That's all right, Tony, I understand—(*Offers his hand*).

TONY—(*Taking his hand and walking down L. with him*)—When you're 'round this way again—drop up. And, oh, my compliments and thanks to the Princess.

ROMNEY—I'll deliver them at once.—(*Romney starts down through the trap L., adding as he descends*)—So long, old boy.

TONY—(*Leaning over rail*)—Merry Christmas, old top.

ROMNEY—(*Now unseen, from below*)—Same to you. (*Sound of door closing below. Tony sinks down on the trunk, crushed, fearful that he is a failure. Knock heard below. It is repeated.*)

TONY—(*Wearily*)—Come in!—(*Primrose rises through the trap*).

PRIMROSE—(*Looking at Tony, noting his dejection*)—Good Lord, sir. You ain't gone and got the willies again.

TONY—(*Gloomily*)—What?

PRIMROSE—(*With a near-sob*)—The willies. You HAVE got 'em!

TONY—(*Rousing himself*)—Shut up, you old cry-baby!—(*Rising*)—Are you any judge of an opera Libretto?

PRIMROSE—I might be—if I knew what it was.

TONY—A libretto—that's the book of an opera—the words—in grand opera they're sometimes sung—in light opera—occasionally.

PRIMROSE—I saw an opera once—the devil was in it.

TONY—Well, there a devil in mine—a charming, romantic devil—but he's house-broken in the last act.

PRIMROSE—(*With awe*)—You, sir, are writin' of an opera?

TONY—Verily—and I tell you in confidence, that I have burst many a button in the effort to write something original. It was to be a masterpiece—but now, I wonder. I thought it was going to work the miracle for me. And it shall.—(*Goes up to table and picks up manuscript*)—Primrose, you see this? It's going to bring me $10,000; do you understand, $10,000.

PRIMROSE—(*Slowly grinning, thinking that Tony is making fun*)—Is that all?

TONY—I see the flicker of incredulence in your watery but kindly eye; and I don't blame you. Ten thousand dollars. It's fabulous!

PRIMROSE—Very likely, sir.

TONY—I assure you it is. Come hither—unbeliever.—(*Primrose approaches Tony*)—Every page is worth not less than—eh—fifty dollars.

PRIMROSE—(*Grinning, unbelievingly*)—I'm afraid you've got somethin' worse 'an the willies—now sir.

TONY—Still unconvinced—then behold!—(*Picks up a newspaper clipping from under the ink-bottle*)—If you'll read that.

PRIMROSE—(*Takes the clipping, fishes out a pair of glasses, and reads the clipping with increasing wonder*)—Well I'm blowed. And this here opry o' yours goin' to get the prize?

TONY—Such is our hope.—(*Takes clipping from him.*)

PRIMROSE—(*In a whisper*)—Ten thousan' dollars! (*With shy curiosity*)—L-leave me look at it, sir.—(*Tony hands him the manuscript. Primrose reads*)—"The Calif looks at her with profound admiration. She lowers her head, but lets her eyes fly up at

him through the tops of her lids."—(*Primrose is dumbfounded. He looks at Tony as though he thought Tony were mad*).

TONY—It CAN be done. Like this.—(*Illustrates: drops his head in a coy, maidenly fashion, rolling up his eyes, and looking coquettishly at Primrose*).

PRIMROSE—(*Glances at him skeptically, and then reads from manuscript*)—"Calif: Your eyes illuminate the path to my soul's dark chamber."—(*Primrose glances at Tony; then reads*)—"He repeats the serenade."—(*Incredibly*)—So that's an opery book? And it's goin' to get you ten thousand dollars?

TONY—(*Taking the manuscript from him*)—Without a doubt. The only difficulty is to get the job done in time. It's only eight days until January first. I've got to work like the devil. That means the consumption of much oil. We must consider the oil-question.

PRIMROSE—You can't work on oil, sir. That gentleman friend of yours—him in the fur coat—didn't happen to lend you a fiver or a somethin'—did he?

TONY—He's not a banker, my dear Primrose. Besides what do we want with money—we paid the rent last week and lived in wantonness on that sonnet.

PRIMROSE—But you ain't paid no rent this week—and the thing you calls the "larder" has got nothin' in it.

TONY—(*Casting an eye about the room cheerfully*)—The trunk. We've eaten everything in it—why not eat the trunk itself?

PRIMROSE—It wouldn't pay to cart it away, sir.

TONY—(*Gaily*)—Then have a look about—there must be something negotiable that we've overlooked—(*Both look around the room. Tony goes to shelf L.U. corner and looks under the curtains. Primrose goes to washstand and looks into it, opens drawer. Tony discovers a fancy waistcoat, light in color, "Loud" in pattern.*)

TONY—Ah!—(*Waving vest*)—A find—a find.

PRIMROSE—There's a big ink-spot on it, sir.

TONY—Yes, I know—a fountain pen did it—I've never carried one since.

PRIMROSE—You haven't got the pen, have you?

TONY—Unfortunately, in a moment of anger I threw it away. But see here, with the coat buttoned, the spot doesn't show—(*Illustrates*).

PRIMROSE—What would be the good of a vest like that, sir, if you couldn't wear your coat open?

TONY—That might admit of some discussion, but—(*Flings waistcoat into L.U. corner*).

PRIMROSE—(*Taking a little worn, gold locket from the wash-stand drawer*)—Here's somethin' more likely—looks as though it might be gold.—(*Holds it out in the palm of his hand to Tony*).

TONY—(*Coming quickly down stage to him*)—That? (*Suddenly realizing what it is, snatches it from him almost in anger*)—No—no!

PRIMROSE—It's gold—ain't it?

TONY—(*Looking at it*)—Y-e-s

PRIMROSE—You'se better leave me soak it—what's the good of it kicking around your drawer there?

TONY—It's a lot of good—good luck, I mean.

PRIMROSE—It ain't brought you much luck as I can see.

TONY—But it will—it will—and even if it shouldn't—(*Puts it carefully in his waistcoat pocket*).

PRIMROSE—It would bring three or four dollars, mebbe—enough to keep you goin' until the opry's done.

TONY—(*With a smile, shaking his head*)—There are some things I can't eat, Primrose.—(*Takes locket from his pocket, opens it and hands it to Primrose. Primrose looks at it, fishes out his glasses, looks at it closely again, takes off glasses and looks studiously at Tony*).

PRIMROSE—It's your mother.—(*Tony nods. Primrose looks at locket again, then hands it to Tony*)—You're the spittin' image of her.—(*Gives a gulp, as though he were about to weep*).

TONY—(*Putting locket in his waistcoat pocket, and quickly giving Primrose a pat on the back*)—Don't cry about it—she wasn't your mother.

PRIMROSE—(*Trying to control himself*)—But I can't help thinkin' what she'd be thinkin'—lookin' down on her son—a gentleman—and him goin' to work on his opera on an empty stummick.

TONY—It would be much worse if I were going to work on an empty head. Now trot along. That thistledowny, evanescent thing we call inspiration is hovering, signalling to my genius.

PRIMROSE—(*Going to the trap down L.*)—Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.—(*He puts his hand in his pocket, takes out handkerchief and with it an unopened letter. He starts. Tony has turned up stage, taking the chair from the register with him*)—I beg pardon, sir—here's a letter I forgot to give you.

TONY—(*Surprised*)—A letter?—(*Comes down stage*)—Ah!

PRIMROSE—(*Handing him the letter*)—It came in the last mail—that's what I come up for—to give it to you—only—

TONY—(*Looking at envelope in surprise*)—From the Fulton National Bank. Primrose, once upon a time I had funds—money—

real money in that bank, and all I had to do to get it was to write a cheque.—(*He opens envelope.*)

PRIMROSE—Yes, sir.

TONY—(*Glancing through letter*)—This seems to be from the cashier. He begins very affectionately: "Dear Sir: You will understand that it is a rule with this bank to carry no accounts which do not maintain an average balance of $500 or over. For the past twenty-one months, your balance has been three dollars and seventeen cents. Kindly close your account at your earliest convenience by withdrawing your balance, and oblige—"—(*Tony cries out joyfully*—Hahlahhah! I have a balance to my credit of Three-seventeen! Do you get that, Primrose?—(*Rushes up to dormer window and looks out*).

PRIMROSE—There's three dollars and seventeen cents of yours in the bank, sir?

TONY—A fortune! A fortune! And it's ten minutes to three. Call me a taxi. I mean get me my overcoat—where's my hat.—(*He runs about the stage looking for his hat, while Primrose gets his coat and hat from under the curtain L.U. corner*)—Banks close at three on the dot.

PRIMROSE—(*Coming down C.*)—Here's your things, sir.

TONY—(*Helped into overcoat by Primrose*)—We shall have a feast tomorrow—a feast. What is tomorrow? Christmas! We shall dine in state, my good Primrose.—(*Snatches his hat from Primrose and starts on a run down the stairs*)—Elijah had his ravens—Quintard has his bankers.—(*Tony disappears through the trap. Sound of door slammed below. Primrose, overcome, sinks down on trunk. In a moment he rises, tidies up the place, smoothes the blanket on the "Gloucester" hammock and pats the pillow affectionately; goes to the table, looks at manuscript, brushing up the spilled tobacco, and making the table neat without disturbing the papers. The Great SHE-BEAR suddenly appears through trap L. She is a huge, towering, malevolent, untidy, middle-aged woman*).

SHE-BEAR—(*Wrathfully, in a big voice*)—So this is where you're loafing, you good-for-nothing lump!

PRIMROSE—(*Surprised, starting from table. He is in deadly fear of her; but does his best to "buck up"*)—No—no, mum. I was only tidyin' up a bit after Mr. Quintard.

SHE-BEAR—(*Stepping up on stage L.*)—Do I pay you for foolin' around up here?

PRIMROSE—I don't know, mum—I——

SHE-BEAR—(*Going L.C.*)—You don't know? Well, I'll tell you—once and for all, understand me: I don't pay nobody nothing for what I don't get.

PRIMROSE—I—I didn't think you'd mind.

SHE-BEAR—You've got another think comin' to you.—(*Emphatically, slapping one huge hand with the other*)—If any of my roomers wants you to clean up for 'em—they've got to settle first with me.

PRIMROSE—Mr. Quintard would—most cheerful—if he could—he's got a beautiful disposition, mum.

SHE-BEAR—Beautiful is as beautiful pays. That's my motto. And what I want to know is—what do you get for waitin' on him—hand and feet.

PRIMROSE—(*With a beatific smile*)—I couldn't tell you, mum.

SHE-BEAR—(*Hotly*)—You tell me double quick—or I'll know the reason why.

PRIMROSE—Very well, mum, I'll do me best: It's like this: Did you ever get very close—in a confidential position—to a real gentleman?

SHE-BEAR—I should say not.

PRIMROSE—I didn't think you had. Well, mum, I was brung up in a gentleman's family—from scullery boy to butler, in the old country; and I served me turn, too, as a gentleman's gentleman.

SHE-BEAR—(*With a sarcastic roar of laughter*)—You—a gentleman's gentleman—whatever that is.

PRIMROSE—Yes mum—and there's the point I'm makin'. It means a lot to me to be close to one of me own agin—just to hear a gentleman's voice—to have him treat me like a human bein' an' a friend—still keepin' me in my place, mum.

SHE-BEAR—So that's all you get out of him—is it?

PRIMROSE—It's more an' enough for me.

SHE-BEAR—He never gives you a tip and you call him a gentleman.

PRIMROSE—You don't judge his sort by their tips—it's their treatment.

SHE-BEAR—(*Snorting, sarcastically, contemptuously*)—He must be a regular swell.

PRIMROSE—I'm not fit to hang up his pants!

SHE-BEAR—But you think you're too high and mighty to clean my cuspidors! Well, you begin on them today. I'll learn you. Come on, now.—(*Waves to the trap*)—You've been loafin' long enough. You can start with the china one in the parlor—and mind you don't break it.

PRIMROSE—(*Going to trap*)—I wasn't engaged to clean cuspidors.

SHE-BEAR—(*Stopping a few steps down trap*)—If you want a better job, you know where you can get it, and you can take it from me, it isn't every landlady that's goin' to put up with an old rum-hound like you.

PRIMROSE—(Starting down trap after her)—I ain't touched a drop for a week—Mr. Quintard's reformin' me.

SHE-BEAR—(*Only her head and shoulders showing above trap*)—If he knew how you got fired from one place and another because you couldn't keep sober—(*Disappears down trap*).

PRIMROSE—(*Going down trap after her*)—Mr. Quintard knows all about me, but he never reminds me how I come to be what I am. That's the difference between you and a gentleman.—(*Exeunt Primrose and She-Bear. Noise of door closing below*).

(*MARJORIE CANER appears at the dormer window, coming from R. She looks in through the glass for a moment, then raises the sash, looks in and listens. She wears a "Liberty" cloak of some soft grey material with the hood over her head; a violet chiffon scarf, a simple, girlish dress, a small, frilled apron, grey stockings and grey slippers*).

(*She retreats from the window to R., but reappears immediately and lifts a large basket, with wicker lids, over the sill and sets it on the floor. She climbs in through the window with care; softly shuts window after her. It is cold. She gives a swift look about the attic, runs to the trap, looks down, listens. She turns and surveys the attic, pitying the meanness of the place. Then she drags the basket down to the register; opens it, and softly singing the song she sings in Act I., takes out holly and greens and swiftly decorates the room with them. Takes out a piece of mistletoe. Laughing softly, she hangs it on a beam. She is enjoying herself hugely; occasionally she tip-toes to the trap and listens. She keeps on the cloak, but throws back the hood. From basket she takes a small white table-cloth; looks at the table, sees that it is covered with manuscript, etc. Then decides to spread cloth on trunk. She returns to basket, takes out pots of jam, and marmalade, a sausage tied with a red ribbon, a cold chicken festively decorated, a Christmas cake, loaf of brown bread, crock of baked beans, tea-caddy spirit lamp, small copper kettle, plate of dainty sandwiches, cookies. These she arranges on the trunk, and surveys her work with delight*).

(*Now she fills the kettle from the pitcher on the wash-stand; gets a match from the table, lights the lamp and sets the kettle on it. This is all a lark for her. She dives into the basket again, takes out*

a large box of cigarettes, sets on table. Then a pink and white comfortable, which she spreads on the "Gloucester" hammock. Studies the effort with rapture. Then she pats the pillow. As she returns to the basket, she starts, goes to the trap, leans over—listening. Then suddenly darts to window. Tries to open it. It sticks resisting her efforts. In a panic, she looks about for a place to hide—darts behind the calico curtain L.U. in corner. Only the tips of her grey pumps show beneath the curtain).

(*Tony enters through the trap, with a loaf of bread sticking out of the top of a bag, a box of crackers, a can of soup, and a Christmas-looking box. He is amazed at the sight of the food on the trunk —comically amazed. He cannot believe his eyes—cannot believe that it is real. He sniffs it, drops his packages on the floor below the trunk. He twists off a leg of the chicken. Takes a bite. It is real-it is delicious. Still holding the drum-stick, he examines everything on the trunk, with growing wonder. Notes the tea service. He is overcome with this largess of food—and such food. Touches the tea-kettle; burns his finger. It is too much. He is going quite mad. All the while he is industriously gnawing the drum-stick. He concludes, yes, he is mad. He turns to the trap).*

TONY—(*Calling at the top of his voice*)—Primrose! (*Goes down through the trap calling*)—Primrose! Primrose! Primrose!

(*Marjorie peeps from behind the curtain in alarm. She is uncertain as to what she should do—whether to try the window again, or remain. All the while Tony is heard below calling:* "Primrose! Primrose!" *Marjories decides to try the window. She starts toward it; then she hears Tony returning up the stairs, and hides behind the curtain again. Only her grey pumps show beneath the curtain).*

(*Tony reappears from the trap. As he comes up he notices the holly and greens, looks about the attic in wonder, trips over the basket C. opens it and takes out a silk muffler; gazes at it in mystification—ties it about his neck. Having cleaned the drum-stick, he drops it in the waste-basket under the table. Returns to the trunk. He is fascinated with the tea-service. Looks into the caddy, the sugar bowl; pats the sausage; helps himself to a sandwich. Knock at door below).*

TONY—(*Excitedly*)—Come up! Come up!—(*Goes to trap, descends a step. Primrose appears. Tony catches him by the collar and drags him up quickly*)—Primrose! Kris Kringle has been here! —(*Indicates the trunk. Primrose looks and gasps. He is speechless*)—Explain, good Primrose, this multiplicity of delectable nutriment—this largess of eats—this sumptuous banquet—these holiday

decorations. Don't tell me that they were brought by one of Goliath's ravens.

PRIMROSE—You've gone and blowed in the whole three dollars and seventeen cents.

TONY—That—them—those! For three-seventeen! This isn't bargain day at the Reitz!

TONY—(*Pointing to his purchases*)—There lie my frugal foragings!

PRIMROSE—I'm blowed.

TONY—Clever dissembler! Tell me at once! You know whence came these gifts!

PRIMROSE—'Pon my word, sir——

TONY—They came from the gentleman in the fur coat. He smuggled them in with your connivance—in my absence. He tipped you to hold your long tongue. Where's that tip?

PRIMROSE—(*Turning his pockets out*)—Honest to Gawd, sir—I ain't let anybody in since you went out!

TONY—Then where did they come from?

PRIMROSE—(*Inspecting the tea service, which appeals to him professionally*)—'Fore Gawd—I'm tellin' the truth, sir! I don't know! This here is the most genteel china I've seen since I used to be butler for the Suydams, sir. It would be a real pleasure I'm sure, to serve you tea in these things!—(*Opens tea-caddy and sniffs*)—There's tea as IS tea.

TONY—But that doesn't explain where it all came from! Do you think there is anyone in this house that—eh—entertains a secret passion for me?—(*Goes up to table*).

PRIMROSE—Not a chance, sir!

TONY—(*Surprised, seeing box of cigarettes*)—Cigarettes! By the hundred!—(*Looks about room, at basket, and then at trap-door in the roof*).

PRIMROSE—It'd make you believe in Kris Kringle—now wouldn't it?

TONY—(*Going down L. and getting ladder*)—Or fairies! That it! Fairies have done it!—(*Takes ladder C.*)

PRIMROSE—I let in no fairies this afternoon, sir.

TONY—Certainly not!

PRIMROSE—And what are you doin' with the ladder?

TONY—Fairies always come in by the roof!—(*Sets ladder up to trap-door, waves Primrose to hold it*)—They heard that we were broke—they didn't know about that check for three-seventeen!—(*Ascends ladder*).

PRIMROSE—(*Holding ladder, with a grin*)—Do you expect to find them up there?

TONY—There's no telling!—(*Unfastens trap*)—I'm going to make a thorough search up here and down there!

(*The calico curtain in L.U. is agitated*).

(*Tony raises the trap and looks out on roof*)—As I thought—there are tracks up here—fairytracks!

PRIMROSE—Pigeontracks!

TONY—(*Re-appearing, closing trap*)—The indications are that the commissary department made its advance upon us through the trap!

PRIMROSE—Excuse me, sir, but they couldn't—the trap was bolted on the inside!

TONY—(*Descending the ladder*)—That settles it—(*Steps down on floor and takes ladder down L. to its place*)—Only fairies could have got that hamper through a bolted trap-door!

PRIMROSE—I don't take no stock in fairies!

TONY—(*Going to the trunk*)—Do you believe in drum-sticks? —(*Twists leg of chicken off and presents it to Primrose*).

PRIMROSE—Thank you—very kindly—sir!

TONY—Have a sandwich, or a piece of cake—or both!—(*Cuts cake*).

PRIMROSE—(*Gnawing drum-stick, and picking up sandwich*) —Prime chicken!

TONY—(*Going to "Gloucester" hammock with piece of cake*)— This will keep us for a month!—(*He begins to sniff—comically puzzled; sniffs the comfortable. Explodes*)—There has been a fairy here and she's been sleeping in my bed!—(*He jumps up and looks at the bed. Primrose stares at Tony as though the youth was mad*) —And she's left her quilt behind her!—(*Tony holds up the comforter. They look at each other in amazement. Primrose then looks all about the room. His eye falls on a tiny violet rosette which lies on the floor upstairs between the window and the curtain. He goes and picks it up*).

PRIMROSE—And here's somethin' else she left behind her!— (*Tony throws quilt on hammock and goes to Primrose—takes rosette and examines it*).

TONY—The plot thickens! This, my good Primrose, is what I'd call a clue!

PRIMROSE—That ain't a clue—it's a what-you-may-call-it of lingery!—(*The calico curtain is agitated*).

TONY—You think so?

PRIMROSE—Sure! I've seen 'em in shop windows on the avenue.

TONY—Cinderella—when she visited the prince, left behind—a glass slipper. My fairy god-mother, when she visited me to-day, left behind a violet rosette!—(The calico curtain is agitated)—That's rather nice! Quite an idea! I think I can USE it!

PRIMROSE—Gentlemen don't wear things like that!

TONY—Possibly not, but authors—well, they use just such trifles to decorate their plots! I needed something like this for that song in Act II. Here! Clear out now! I'm going to work!—(*Lays rosette on table*).

PRIMROSE—But we aint' found out who sent—

TONY—(*Leading him down L.*)—I'll leave that to you. I've got hold of an idea—must write it out! You go ahead—learn the name of my fairy god-mother—and come and tell me!——Oh, here's a magnificent Christmas present for you!—(*Picks up box from floor below trunk. Opens it, and displays suspenders, dangles them*)—There! Useful and decorative at the same time!

PRIMROSE—(*With a gulp, almost in tears*)—Oh, sir, you shouldn't have blowed yourself on me like that! (*Gives a sob*).

TONY—But see—(*Waves hand over trunk*)—The fairies provide! Here—(*Picks up sausage*)—You're wild about sausage!—(*Gives him sausage*)—But don't eat the sash!

(*THE GREAT SHE-BEAR suddenly appears through the trap L.*)

SHE-BEAR—(*To Primrose, wrathfully, in a big voice*)—So you're up here again, spending the day, are you!!!!

TONY—Not spending the day—just bringing up a letter to me!

SHE-BEAR—(Snapping at Tony)—I heard you call him half an hour ago! Do you think I'm paying him wages just to piddle about up here all afternoon—bringin' you a letter!

TONY—Well, you don't need to make such an infernal row about it!—(Primrose is cowering against the L. wall down stage. The She-Bear is now up on the stage by the trap. Tony is facing her L.C. down stage.).....

SHE-BEAR—(*Thundering*)—I'll make all the row I please—and without askin' leave of you!—(*To Primrose*)—Here you—

TONY—Then you'll make it somewhere else.

SHE-BEAR—Don't give me any of your impudence, young man!

TONY—(*Suavely*)—I might give you all the impudence I could scrape together, and the balance would still be in your favor!

SHE-BEAR—If you can't talk plain—keep your tongue to yourself!

TONY—In plain words—I object exceedingly to the rude habit you have of bursting into my apartment without knocking!

SHE-BEAR—It's my house—I'll do as I like in it!

TONY—This is my room! And you have no right to enter it without my permission—so long as I pay my rent.

SHE-BEAR—You haven't paid your rent—but you can go and squander the money you ought to be givin' me—in swell food—(*Making a violent gesture toward the trunk*)—and fixin's! So don't you talk back to me, young man, or the first thing you know—

TONY—(*Taking two one-dollar bills from his pocket*)—I'll pay the rent!—(*Hands bills to her*).

SHE-BEAR—(*Growling*)—That's all very well, but I want you to understand, Mr. Quintard, that I won't have you keepin' Jerry potterin' around up here—chinnin' to him and fillin' his old gullet—that I won't!—(*To Primrose*)—You get down stairs double-quick and when you've done the cuspidors, you can scrub the vestibule! Do you hear?

PRIMROSE—Yes, mum!—(*With a wink at Tony, he scuttles down through the trap*).

SHE-BEAR—(*To Tony*)—He's my servant—not yours!—(*Starts down through trap*).

TONY—Thank you for putting it so delicately! And just to show you that there's no ill feeling, permit me to offer you a piece of my chicken!—(*Taking knife and fork*)—The choicest part is none too good for you.—(*Cuts off the tail-end*).

TONY—What do you say to the Pope's Nose?—(*Offers it to her over the rail on the end of the fork*).

SHE-BEAR—(*Furiously*)—Eat it yourself!—(*She exits down trap. Tony laughs. Sound of door shut violently below*).

(*Tony with a smile places the "Pope's Nose" on the dish; goes up to the table; takes cigarette, lights it, sits behind table and smokes luxuriously; picks up violet rosette, studies it for a moment smilingly; seizes pen and begins to write*).

(*MARJORIE peeps from behind curtain at him. She is greatly worried, but sees no way of making her escape*).

(*Tony stops writing, rises, paces up the stage; then goes to L.U. corner where Marjorie is hiding, takes turban from shelf, puts it on, goes back to table, looks at rosette and starts to work again. Inspiration fails him. He looks about the room vaguely. Presently his eyes discover Marjorie's grey-shod slippers showing beneath the cur-*

tain. He is comically amazed. He studies them for a moment before speaking).

TONY—No wonder I couldn't work! Even the presence of a fairy is distracting! You can always tell a fairy by her feet!—(*Rises and stands there behind table*)—I know not whence you came, nor by what magic means you gained an entrance here; but as Genie of this Castle, I bid you come forth!—(*Waits a moment*)—I promise not to eat you!—(*Marjorie very much confused, parts the curtains and stands there, looking at him, half smiling. Tony gives an exclamation of surprised delight. He is charmed, wonderstruck; slowly takes off his turban*)—Oh, my artistic soul!!! Fairies and ministers of grace, introduce me!!!—(*Marjorie makes a move as though to speak*)—No—no! If you have a voice—don't speak—not yet! Let ME explain you! You came from the Isle of Bliss—on a sunbeam, one of those bright, playful early-morning sunbeams that we hear so much of, but never rise in time to meet! They have the run of my attic—for one of the smallest hours—while I still sleep! That's it! One of them—perfumed with the south land—carried you in this morning while I slept! You had just finished your marketing, and, as any lazy fairy naturally would, you called your sunbeam —like mortals call their cabs—to take you home again. But your sunbeams had been waiting for you in the vineyard—just across the way from the delicatessen shop. He had probably lingered too long over the grapes; and feeling in a sportive mood, he picked you up and inadvertently shot you through my window pane!—(*Marjorie laughs*)—Ah! She laughs!

MARJORIE—I'd laugh more—only my teeth are chattering! Won't you invite me to tea? The kettle's boiling.

TONY—A thousand pardons!—(*Picks up his chair and plants it at the register facing L.*)—Permit me. You provide the feast—I the hospitality!—(*Waves her to the chair with a flourish of his turban. She goes to the chair obediently*)—Accept a mortal's thanks!—(*Pushes the trunk in front of her to serve as a table*)—for this delightful Christmas fare! Pray join me!—(*Looks at her with admiration. She smilingly starts to prepare the tea*)—A fairy at tea. Thank you, as well—(*Waving his hand about*)—for trimming my humble habitation after the fashion of the season—for the scarf—you see I wear your colors—(*Goes to hammock*)—and for the quilt—in which I take the liberty of wrapping you.—(*Carefully wraps the quilt about her*)—I shall be glad to have you chatter—but not with the cold.

MARJORIE—You make me feel very much at home. How do you like your tea?

TONY—(*Going up to curtain L.U. corner*)—I think I like it strong.—(*Gets soap box from behind curtain*).

MARJORIE—But you mustn't have it strong—it isn't good for you!

TONY—(*Bringing the box down to the L. side of the trunk*)—I see at once that I am going to be bossed within an inch of my life.

MARJORIE—Men never know what is good for them.

TONY—I'm sure this visitation of yours is very good for me.

MARJORIE—(*Pouring tea*)—Dear me, I forgot the cream.

TONY—(*Starting up*)—Must you have cream in your tea?

MARJORIE—No—no! Sit down! I never take cream in my tea.

TONY—Neither do I in anything—it's too fattening.—(*Sits again*).

MARJORIE—(*Passing him a cup of tea*)—I like it nice and thick on big strawberries, or whipped on top of my chocolate.

TONY—(*Taking tea cup*)—If you'll promise to come again. I'll promise to have strawberries and chocolate and cream. Meanwhile, may I offer you a piece of cake? I can recommend it.

MARJORIE—(*Sipping tea with satisfaction*)—Thank you.

TONY—(*Cuting cake*)—And by the way—would you have far to come?

MARJORIE—But you explained my coming so beautiful—

TONY—(*Giving her cake*)—Still, don't you think I was a trifle sketchy as to details?

MARJORIE—You insist upon having the details?

TONY—I entreat.

MARJORIE—Suppose I tell you a story.

TONY—(*Helping himself to a sandwich*)—I can think of nothing I would like better.

MARJORIE—Well then: Once upon a time a rich little girl came from a far country to live alone in a big house with her father.

TONY—(*Starting, frowning—almost angrily*)—You're not the rich girl next door?

MARJORIE—You mustn't interrupt like that! The rich girl was very lonely—so she engaged—a companion—(*Significantly*).

TONY—Oh, you're her companion!

MARJORIE—(*Raising a finger, warning him to be still*)—The companion was a sort of poor relation—also very much alone—and weary of the world. She heard of a young man who lived at the top of the house next door

TONY—Sir Romney-of-the-Long-Tongue told the Veiled Princess about the poor young man.

MARJORIE—The Veiled Princess?

TONY—Yes. That's what I call the billionairess who lives in the adjoining palace. I suppose Romney told her and she told you.

MARJORIE—It may have happened that way—but the heroine of my story——

TONY—The Princess's companion.

MARJORIE—Of course! Well, she never would have known a thing about her neighbor, if it had not been for this:

"He spins no song, he rears no dome,
Out of his heart he builds a home!
Healer he of a woman's scars—
God's hand shall throne his name in stars."

TONY—(*Delighted*)—Oooooh! And you repeat it as though you liked it! Romney told me that the Princess—

MARJORIE—Will you please not interrupt!

TONY—Forgive me. I was just curious to know. Romney said the Princess liked the song—I—I wondered if you did.

MARJORIE—It was the song that gave the Princess's companion the courage to—to—venture across the roof from her window to—to yours.

TONY—Across the roof?—(*Suddenly rises*)—By Jove!—(*Going to the window*)—I never thought of that.—(*Looking out of window*)—You have plenty of nerve.

MARJORIE—It's perfectly safe—only a very cold crossing.

TONY—(*Coming down to trunk and looking at her with admiration*)—You're wonderful.

MARJORIE—Oh, I'm quite strong.—(*Raises her arm to make her biceps stand out*)—See.

TONY—(*Tentatively feels her arm*)—Marvellous muscle! But I'm interrupting your thrilling narrative.—(*Sits, holds out cup*).

MARJORIE—(*Re-filling his cup*)—Your song was your letter of credit.

TONY—It was.—(*Proudly*)—I got three dollars for it—they give you twenty-five cents a line. I remember I wished I had written two or three more lines while I was about it.

MARJORIE—(*Indignantly*)—It was worth twenty-five dollars a line.

TONY—(*Rising, bowing*)—Thank you. I wish you were an editor. But I have interrupted you.

MARJORIE—I knew that anybody who could talk to your heart like that must be awfully nice—

TONY—I am—believe me.

MARJORIE—So—well—thought it would be only neighborly, you know, if I should—eh—call on you—don't you think so?

TONY—Nothing could possibly be more neighborly—an old and delightful custom, which I am glad that in the kindness of your heart you have revived. But you have gone the custom one better, thank you.—(*Waves his hand over the table*).

MARJORIE—Oh—these? I—Icouldn't help it—it was only in the way of—of looking after you—my—my mothering instinct.

TONY—Which you get from your mother.

MARJORIE—(With a little catch of her breath)—Y—es! My mother was—was such a—sweet mother. She was always looking after people who hadn't mothers—or were ill—or sad—or lonely.

TONY—I understand.

MARJORIE—I knew you would.

TONY—I've been calling you my Fairy God-mother. I always knew I must have one somewhere. Welcome.—(*Holds out his hand to her across the trunk*)—I am delighted to meet you. But to be absolutely authentic you know, you should have a cap.

MARJORIE—(*Pulling hood of cloak over her head*)—I have a hood.

TONY—(*Looking at her critically*)—Under the circumstances, I think the hood will do very well—very well indeed. It is probably more becoming than a cap.

MARJORIE—The hood should, of course, make me invisible.

TONY—I'm glad it is not that kind of a hood.

MARJORIE—You understand I didn't intend to be seen—I thought it would be so jolly—such a lark—to have a hand in your Christmas—and disappear without being discovered.

TONY—But it's ever so much better that I discovered you. And technically speaking, it should not have been otherwise. Fairy god-mothers always appear to their beneficiaries, and give good advice with their gifts.

MARJORIE—Of course I don't know you well enough to give you any real gifts, as fairy god-mothers do.

TONY—Not real? These are most substantial. And let me tell you I think it was very jolly, very sweet of you to take so much trouble—

MARJORIE—It has made me happy—you—you—no one could have accepted these foolish little things more graciously—

TONY—I accepted them in the spirit in which they were given.

MARJORIE—You ARE the Cinderella-man.

TONY—(*Surprised, then with a smile appreciating the whimsey*)—The Cinderella-Man!

MARJORIE—That's what I've been calling you to myself. I hope you don't mind?

TONY—I shouldn't mind if you called me "Towser."—(*Pause. They look at each other half-smilingly*)—What will you take for your thoughts?

MARJORIE—Yours.

TONY—Ladies first.

MARJORIE—I was thinking that we were going to be good friends.

TONY—Thank you. There's no doubt about it.

MARJORIE—Now—pay up.

TONY—I was thinking—I'm glad you are not the Veiled Princess.

MARJORIE—You dislike princesses so much?

TONY—I do—outside of books. Rich girls, in the flesh are conceited, empty-headed bores. And their families are worse. If a man pays a princess the slightest attention her family immediately suspects that he is after her money.

MARJORIE—Ah! You've had an unfortunate experience.

TONY—I? Never! I never paid any attention to princesses. And I never—never will!

MARJORIE—I'm the last one in the world to take the part of princesses, but I do think you are rather hard on them.

TONY—But consider. Does a poor man—a poor working man in particular—want to ruin his life by marrying a millionairess?

MARJORIE—How could she ruin his life?

TONY—In a dozen ways. First of all, he couldn't expect her to live as he had been used to living. That would mean that he must accept assistance—pecuniary assistance—from either the princess herself or her family; and that would be the death of his self-respect. Second, it would kill his ambition—there would no longer be the actual, biting necessity to work—and necessity is a great spur to ambition. Third, without ambition, without work, he would become a most unhappy wretch. Fourth, All the joy of not knowing what is coming next—the fillip of speculation, would be removed from his life. Fifth, and for the time being the last, he would never have what I imagine to be the most profound of satisfactions—the privilege of taking care of a woman all by himself—working for her—struggling for her—suffering for her—(*There is a pause. He looks at her smiling a little; she looks at him soberly, with approval*).

MARJORIE—I—I agree with you.

TONY—I was sure you would.

MARJORIE—But—but suppose—just suppose, you know—that you should happen to—to run across a princess who cared nothing about money—only the things you speak of—and—and you should like her very much—

TONY—My dear fairy god-mother—such a princess doesn't exist outside of a book.

MARJORIE—I said—"just suppose." You'd pay some attention to her—you wouldn't turn up your nose at her—would you?

TONY—No. I'd be fearfully polite to her.

MARJORIE—You might even grow to—to—like her?

TONY—I might grow to be quite fond of her.

MARJORIE—Well then—the Veiled Princess next door is like that.

TONY—Impossible! I can't believe it—it's just your loyalty to her!—(*The light outside begins to fade*).

MARJORIE—Oh no! I can prove it to you! Let me bring her to call some day.

TONY—(*Rising suddenly*)—Please—please don't! I really should be terribly put out. I'll take your word for it—I'll believe whatever you wish me to believe—

MARJORIE—I think you might be a trifle more hospitable!—(*Rises, drops her violet scarf*).

TONY—(*Picks up scarf, holds it looking at it with pleasure*)—It isn't that I'm inhospitable—I'm cowardly—I'm more afraid of a Princess than I should be of a polar bear.

MARJORIE—(*Going up stage*)—Anyway, you're not afraid of me.—(*Holds out her hand to him*).

TONY—(*Takes her hand*)—You're not going so soon!

MARJORIE—I must—I have my—my duties—

TONY—(*Giving scarf to her. She winds it about her throat*)—Then it wouldn't be kind of me to keep you.—(*Picks up violet rosette from table, offers it to her*)—I think this belongs to you.—(*Marjorie looks at it and suddenly covers her face with her hands laughing*)—I'd like to keep it. It's been a source of inspiration to me.—(*Picks up sheet of manuscript from the table and reads*)

"Love, whose feet are shod with light,
Lost this ribbon in her flight,
Rosette of the twilight sky,
Wafts to me Love's lullaby."

(*As he reads, she stops laughing, lowers her hands and stands there listening. When he finishes he looks up at her smiling*).

MARJORIE—Keep it—in payment for your verse.

TONY—(*Pleased*)—Ah! You like it?

MARJORIE—Oh, ever so much! Anyone who can write songs like that, should write an opera.—(*He smiles*)—Why don't you write an opera? There's a lot of money in operas. Did you know that they're offering a prize of ten thousand dollars for an opera—now?

TONY—(*Picking up his manuscript and shaking it at her, laughing*)—This is the book that's going to get the prize.

MARJORIE—(*Amazed—in wonder*)—Oh, oh—really! Let me see it—may I?

TONY—(*Offering manuscript to her*)—Surely!—(*She takes it eagerly and looks at it. Tony smiles*)—You don't have to read it.

MARJORIE—How nearly is it finished?

TONY—Oh, I'll have it done in time.

MARJORIE—You must! You must!

TONY—Can you read my handwriting?

MARJORIE—It's rather scriggly—but I can make it out. You know you should have this typewritten.

TONY—I suppose it should be, but—

MARJORIE—I—have a typewriter.

TONY—I don't think I could manage one.

MARJORIE—But I can! Let me type your manuscript for you.

TONY—That would be an imposition.

MARJORIE—I'd love to do it—and I'd take awfully good care of the manuscript.

TONY—It would be splendid of you to do it.

MARJORIE—Then you will?

TONY—It would be a great favor.

MARJORIE—May I take this with me?

TONY—(*Taking manuscript from her*)—Yes. All but the last few pages—that will be up to the end of Act two.

MARJORIE—And I'll finish the rest as you give it to me.

TONY—Splendid!—(*Hands manuscript to her*).

MARJORIE—(*Taking MSS.*)—Now I MUST go.

TONY—(*Going to window*)—Just a moment—(*Takes broom from R. side of window*)—I want to sweep the snow off—(*Raises*

window)—make a path for you across the roof—(*Climbs out window. Is seen brushing outside, then disappears off R.*)

MARJORIE—You're so nice and thoughtful.—(*She turns from window, puts Mss, on table; ;takes quilt and spreads it carefully and affectionately on the hammock; gives the pillow a pat; picks up box L. of trunk and sets it under window as a step. Tony reappears at window. He climbs in and shakes snow from broom*).

TONY—There—no danger of your slipping now!—(*Sees basket*)—Why didn't I think of putting you in the basket and sleighing you across.

MARJORIE—Thank you—but I'd rather walk.—(*She picks up the Mss. and holds out her hand*).

TONY—(*Smiling*)—Now that you found the way, you'll come again?

MARJORIE—I must. You're engaged me as your secretary.—(*Going to window*).

TONY—That was very clever of me. When shall I see you?

MARJORIE—That will depend entirely upon the Princess. I'll come my first afternoon out. She may let me off for an hour to-morrow—you see it's a holiday.

TONY—(*Putting his hand in his vest pocket*)—I wonder if you would be good enough to accept—this little Christmas present.—(*Puts the little gold locket in her hand*).

MARJORIE—It's very beautiful and old.

TONY—It's a hundred years old—I guess—it has a picture of my real mother in it.

MARJORIE—Your mother. Oh, I couldn't take such a precious thing.

TONY—That's why I'm giving it to you—because it is precious.

MARJORIE—I'll keep it—for you—so long as we're friends.—(*Lights lower, dusk outside*).

TONY—Thank you.—(*He hands her out through the window*)—Good-night, little fairy god-mother.

MARJORIE—(*Outside the window*)—Good-night, Cinderella-man. Merry Christmas.—(*She disappears R. Tony stands at the window looking after her as the Curtain Falls on Act II*).

CURTAIN.

ACT III

(A Week Later).

SCENE:

(*Tony's attic. It is neater and more comfortable than in Act II. The window has been washed. A chintz curtain in a good design, hung on a wire, conceals the washstand and the Gloucester hammock on the R., another chintz curtain, of the same pattern, has replaced the calico curtain under the shelf in the L. upper corner; a chintz cottage curtain, also of the same pattern, frames the dormer window. The trunk stands in its former place against the traprail, but it is now enveloped in a couch cover, and there are two sofa cushions on it. A small folding card table, folded up, leans against the rail below the trunk. An oil stove, bright with newness, with arms, R.C. A tulle scarf, neatly folded, lies on the writing table, which is the only untidy spot in the room*).

(*Rise of curtain discovers ROMNEY EVANS, in fur coat change of clothes from first act, ascending through the trap L., followed by PRIMROSE*).

PRIMROSE—Yes sir—he said to me as he was comin' down stairs: "I'm goin' out for a breath o' air."—(*Romney comes up on stage and looks at the improvements with wonder. Primrose stands at the rail*)—And that means—knowin' Mr. Quintard's habits as I does me own—that he's not likely to be back before three o'clock.

ROMNEY—(*Looking at his watch*)—In that case, I haven't long to wait.

PRIMROSE—(*Eager to be rid of Romney*)—O' course, sir, there's no tellin'—he might go for a longer walk than usual—he's been workin' so hard—and when he does come back he'll be wantin' to get to work again.

ROMNEY—(*With a laugh*)—You can't get rid of me! I'm going to wait.—(*Sits in camp chair R.C.*)

PRIMROSE—I wasn't thinkin' o' such a thing, sir.

ROMNEY—Then we might as well dismiss it as a topic of conversation.—(*Waving his stick about the room*)—Quite a metamorphosis.

PRIMROSE—(*Over his head, feeling his way*)—You may be right, sir; but that—that's a matter of opinion, as Mr. Quintard would be sayin'.

ROMNEY—There can be but one opinion—Mr. Quintard has struck it rich.

PRIMROSE—(*Relieved that at last he can understand*)—Yes, sir; oh, yes, indeed sir—he has had a bit o' luck.

SHE-BEAR—(*Speaking from below L.—furiously*)—Primrose! Come down out of there! Hear me!—(*Primrose and Romney start. The Great She-Bear suddenly appears through the trap. She is surprised to see Romney. Speaking with a low growl*)—Huh! I didn't know the gentleman was here!—(*Romney rises with a polite bow*).

PRIMROSE—(*Timidly*)—I was showin' him up. He's waitin' to see Mr. Quintard.

SHE-BEAR—(*Angrily*)—You're not waiting to see Mr. Quintard.

ROMNEY—No, madam—he was entertaining me.

SHE-BEAR—If there's any entertaining to be done—I'll do it.—(*To Primrose, angrily*)—Leave me catch you up here again, you lump, and I'll take the broom to you.—(*To Romney*)—You don't know what a trial he is—the old reprobate—pottering and dawdling, taking it easy—when he's got his work to do.—(*To Primrose, fiercely*)—Don't stand there with your big mouth open. Nothin's going to fall into it. Clear out—and be quick about it—you've got the halls to sweep—the bannisters to wipe down—and mind, when you've got that done—you'll sift the ashes.—(*Primrose hurries down through the trap. To Romney*)—I ain't seen you since the day you paid Mr. Quintard's rent.

ROMNEY—That's my misfortune.

SHE-BEAR—You've been here since, ain't you?

ROMNEY—I've called once or twice.

SHE-BEAR—The way he's got this place all fussed up, beats me. I guess you give him the money.

ROMNEY—I don't give Mr. Quintard money.—(*Sits in camp chair*).

SHE-BEAR—(*Sarcastically*)—Then I'd like to know how a man as poor as him can buy better curtains than I've got in my best rooms.—(*She waits for a moment for Romney to reply. He looks at his watch. She goes on, annoyed*)—And what's more, I'd like to know how these things got up here.—(*Romney studies his watch*)—I generally know what comes into this house.—(*Stalks about the stage, looking at the various improvements*).—

There's somethin' queer about it.—(*Looks at Romney, waiting for his comment*)—I say, there's somethin' queer about it. Don't you think so?

ROMNEY—"Queer?"

SHE-BEAR—(*Emphatically*)—Yes. It ain't like a man. If a woman had this attic, she might be putting up curtains and so on—but a man—a man would be queer to—(*She breaks off as her eye falls on the tulle scarf on the end of the table. She looks at Romney. He is not looking at her. She picks up the scarf, looks at it, sniffs it, becomes very suspicious, glances at Romney and deftly hides the scarf under her apron*)—I wonder if you're a relation of his—a rich relation maybe?

ROMNEY—No.

SHE-BEAR—Could you be a detective—I wonder?

ROMNEY—No.

SHE-BEAR—You don't talk much—do you?

ROMNEY—No.

SHE-BEAR—(*Going to trap*)—I guess you'll be waiting for him.

ROMNEY—Yes.

SHE-BEAR—(*Descending through trap*)—Well, you can say to him for me—that if he can live up here like a dude he can pay rent in advance—and that it'll be due on Monday.—(*She disappears through the trap*).

(*Romney breathes a sigh of relief. Sound of a clock striking "three" in the distance. Romney rises and strolls up to window. Looks out for a moment, then suddenly starts back, and steps behind the curtain, which conceals the washstand and hammock R.*)

(*MARJORIE, dressed as in Act II, with hood over her head, appears at the window, with a typewritten manuscript in a large envelope under one arm and carrying a small basket on the other. She peeps in at the window; then raises the sash and climbs in. She shuts the window places the manuscript on the table, goes to the trap and listens, places basket on floor below trunk, then goes back to table, gets a match and lights oil stove*).

(*ROMNEY peeps at her from the curtain R. steps out smiling. She starts, hearing his step, turns in alarm*).

MARJORIE—(*Breathlessly, surprised*)—Oh—Romney—(*Relieved*)—How—you—frightened me.

ROMNEY—(*Pretending to be angry*)—So this is what you're up to?

MARJORIE—Don't be cross with me! I'm only doing what you wanted me to do—looking after Tony.

ROMNEY—(*With a laugh*)—You're making a thorough job of it—aren't you?—(*Waves hand about the room*).

MARJOJRIE—Oh, no—there's so much more I could do—but I don't dare? He only let me put up the curtains because I said I couldn't stand the place without them.

ROMNEY—He doesn't think you buy them—does he?

MARJORIE—No—no! Isn't it too dreadful—I have to lie about everything—or, Romney! I tell him they're all my personal possessions—stored in the loft next door—that it's so much better to use them—they'd only be gathering dust.

ROMNEY—And he believes you?

MARJORIE—Every word I say. I'd be terribly ashamed—only it's all for his comfort—like this stove. He thinks I borrowed it from myself. So I did, but I bought it. Isn't it cute?

ROMNEY—(*Laconically*)—I've never seen anything so cute in all my life. It gives out real heat.—(*Slips out of his overcoat and drops it on camp chair*)—It looks as though one might even cook on it.

MARJORIE—One does! Oh, Romney, it's really too wonderful! Every day, I come across the roof—at about half after three, and bring what I call my "tea" with me. Of course, it's really for Tony—oh, lots of things—good and nourishing, you know. I must fatten him up. So after tea—just before I go—I make him hot little messes for his dinner. I just love to cook—and sometimes it smells so good, I wish I could stay and have dinner with him.

ROMNEY—How does he take these ministrations of yours?

MARJORIE—Oh, in the sweetest, jolliest way—so—so matter-of-fact. You know, I'm just his fairy god-mother, who pops in and out. To-day I've brought him a typewritten copy of his opera. It's done—finished—all but the editing—touching it up, you know. And oh, Romney—it is too beautiful—I love every word of it.

ROMNEY—I'm afraid you are prejudiced.

MARJORIE—Oh, no I'm not! Grayson, father's secretary, who did the typewriting for me on the sly, says it's better than "The Merry Widow." You know, it has some awfully cunning jokes in it—all mixed up in the dearest way with the romance. The Cinderella-man has a way of making what I'd call tender

jokes—they make you laugh and cry at the same time, and it's all so like him—so—so—oh, I don't know how to describe it——

ROMNEY—(*Dryly, looking down steadily at her*)—I think I understand.

MARJORIE—(*Looks up at him suddenly, alarmed, then embarressed*)—Why—why—Romney—you—you—couldn't—(*She turns away from him and sinks down on trunk*).

ROMNEY—(*Seriously*)—I hope this isn't going to be more than I bargained for—(*Going to trunk and looking down at her*)—Eh, little girl?

MARJORIE—(*Catching hold of his hand, and drawing him close to her*)—Oh, Romney—I've never been so happy—(*Holding his hand to her cheek*)—and—so—so miserable.—(*She gives a little sob*).

ROMNEY—(*Comforting her*)—It's quite possible that your Cinderella-man is just as much in love with you as you are with him—(*She shakes her head, and wipes her eyes*)—But under the circumstances—as any gentleman would—he refrains from declaring himself.

MARJORIE—Oh no—it isn't that—HE DOESN'T CARE. I can tell. He's sweet and nice as he can be—as a brother might be. But he so—so impersonal. He never really SEES me. Sometimes he doesn't realize that I'm here. I'm like a pet puppy-dog to him. I'm sure he never thinks of me when I'm away. Of course, his mind is all on his opera—I understand that, only I wish——

ROMNEY—Tony's probably too sure of your service. Geniuses have a way of taking things for granted. You must make him anxious.

MARJORIE—I couldn't do that.

ROMNEY—Just a wee bit. Now he expects you here promptly at half after three—

MARJORIE—Yes. I was never late but once—I sent Celeste for some strawberries for him and she was fearfully slow—I heard him whistling for me.

ROMNEY—Oh, he whistles for you?

MARJORIE—I told him he should whistle, if he ever wanted me outside of the regular time.

ROMNEY—Huh! You are ahead of time to-day.

MARJORIE—I couldn't wait.

ROMNEY—You must wait to-day—keep him waiting.

MARJORIE—(*Protesting*)—Oh, Romney.

ROMNEY—You must—go now! (*Picks up her basket*)—Take your basket and your manuscript with you.

MARJORIE—(*Rising reluctantly from trunk*)—You really—think—?

ROMNEY—I do!—(*Conducts her up stage and gives her manuscript in envelope*)—You must not return until at least ten minutes after I give the signal——

MARJORIE—You won't forget—you'll give me a signal?

ROMNEY—Now, let's see—it's usually a light placed in a window, isn't it. But that's not practical—no—decidedly not. I might throw something out of the window.

MARJORIE—I won't have you messing up my nice, clean roof—nothing but rain or snow is allowed there.

ROMNEY—How would it do if I managed to hang one of my best handkerchiefs out of the window.—(*Takes bright-colored handkerchief from his pocket*).

MARJORIE—That would do.—(*Sound of door, far below, banged. She opens window*)—I'm sure that's Tony—he always bangs the front door.

ROMNEY—Out with you.—(*Marjorie climbs through the window with manuscript and basket*).

MARJORIE—(*Outside the window*)—Remember—he—doesn't know who I really am—and I'm so afraid that if he should find out—(*Door is banged just below. Marjorie disappears, going R. Romney closes window and stands looking out. Tony comes bounding up through the trap breathlessly, expecting to find Marjorie there. Surprised at seeing Romney, who turns from window*).

ROMNEY—(*Coming down stage to shake Tony's hand*)—How are you, old man?

TONY—(*Unable to control his disappointment as he takes Romney's hand*)— Hello!

ROMNEY—(*With a smile*)—You don't seem overjoyed to see me.

TONY—(*With forced enthusiasm*)—Oh yes I am—yes, I am. —(*Taking off his overcoat*)—Sit down—sit down.—(*Steals a look out window*).

ROMNEY—No—I'm not going to stay—I only dropped in to ask you if you hadn't changed your mind about the Princess!

TONY—(*Coming down from window and throwing hat and coat on trunk*)—In what way? In what way?—(*Turns to oil stove and stands there warming his hands*).

ROMNEY—About meeting her.

TONY—(*With a bow to Romney, who is standing on the R.*

side of oil stove opposite Tony)—I don't want to be rude—but—NO thank you.—(*Goes up to window and looks out*).

ROMNEY—I shan't insist.—(*Pause, looks at Tony with a smile*).—You've been making yourself quite comfortable here.

TONY—Yes! Yes!—(*Coming down from window, restlessly*)—Friend—lent me these things. Awfully good of her—wasn't it?

ROMNEY—(*Feigning surprise*)—HER?

TONY—(*Turning to him, frankly*)—Yes. And I don't mind telling you, I'm expecting her every minute.

ROMNEY—Oh, ho! Tony—Tony!

TONY—There's no nonsense between us. The girl is simply doing my typewriting—that's all.

ROMNEY—Some scrubby female from a down-town office!

TONY—Scrubby? She's one of the daintiest little things you ever laid your eyes on.

ROMNEY—Ah! And yet you tell me there's no nonsense?

TONY—(*Warmly*)—There isn't. We're friends—FRIENDS. Very good, wholesome friends.—(*Restlessly goes up to window*).

ROMNEY—(*Jeeringly*)—Does she arrive by way of the window?

TONY—(*Turning on him, suddenly, suspiciously*)—What do you know about it?

ROMNEY—The way you trot up and down to the window makes me suspicicus.

TONY—See here, Romney—can you keep a secret?

ROMNEY—That's the better part of my trade.

TONY—Well, then——she DOES come by the window.

ROMNEY—Oh, go on—

TONY—It's a fact.

ROMNEY—(*Going to the window*)—This window?

TONY—Yes. You'll never guess who it is.

ROMNEY—Never:—so you'd better tell me.

TONY—It's my fairy god-mother.

ROMNEY—A minute ago it was your private secretary.

TONY—That's the beauty of a fairy god-mother—she can turn herself into almost anything—from a typewriter to a cook.

ROMNEY—She must be very handy to have about the house.

TONY—She is—relieves me of so many responsibilities.

ROMNEY—What's her name?

TONY—Blest if I know.

ROMNEY—You must call her something.

TONY—I do. I call her—god-mother.

ROMNEY—(*Feigning impatience*)—Are you going to tell me who she is—or not?

TONY—That's the secret! She's the companion of your Princess next door.

ROMNEY—Oooooh!—(*Looks out window*)—She—she sneaks across the roof to your window?

TONY—(*Impatiently, pulling him away from window*)—Yes! Yes! Come away—she might see you.

ROMNEY—I suppose this began by your flirting with her out your window.

TONY—(*Warmly*)—It did not.

ROMNEY—But as I recall her—she is not unattractive.

TONY—(*Puzzled as to what he is driving at*)—She's—she's quite pretty.

ROMNEY—Ah, then I don't blame you.

TONY—(*Impatiently*)—There's nothing to blame anybody about. I'm not going to tell you how it began; but I want you to understand once and for all that there's nothing sentimental in our relations.

ROMNEY—A business proposition—is it?—(*Drops down on trunk*).

TONY—(*Impatiently, pacing stage up and down R.*)—No—no! It's—it's a—a comfortable sort of—oh, thunder. She's the salt of the earth and—and all that. Looks after me in the most motherly fashion—comes every day with my freshly typewritten copy and tea-basket. All very chummy and so on.

ROMNEY—That's the way you see the affair.

TONY—(*Turning on him sharply*)—I won't have it called an "Affair."

ROMNEY—Excuse me. You don't see it that way, but how does she see it?

TONY—As I do—of course.

ROMNEY—You can't be sure of that.

TONY—Oh yes, I can.

ROMNEY—You never know what's going on in the back of a woman's head.

TONY—And I have no curiousity to learn.

ROMNEY—But where are you two drifting?

TONY—(*Laughing*)—You old sentimentalist. Your mind is set on a romance that doesn't exist. Mine is set on an opera that must be finished and mailed to-night.—(*Picks up Romney's coat*)—Here's your rug. Crawl into it. I've got to signal my

God-mother for that manuscript. —(*Romney rises and takes coat from Tony, who goes up to the window*).

ROMNEY—You're a stony-hearted, young pup!—(*Tony raises the window and whistles*).

TONY—(*Lowering window*)—That'll fetch her.

ROMNEY—I tell you, you're a stony-hearted young pup!

TONY—(*Coming down and picking up Romney's hat*)—Here's your hat, old top.

ROMNEY—Do you regard that girl simply as a machine that grinds out your opera for you? Or as a char-woman, who scrubs your floor?

TONY—(*Indignantly*)—She doesn't scrub my floor.

ROMNEY—But you do regard her as a sort of machine.

TONY—(*Laughing*)—You make me tired—I don't "regard" her at all—(*Soberly*)—But I am profoundly grateful to her.—(*Picks up Romney's stick*)—Here's your stick.

ROMNEY—She hasn't come yet.

TONY—(*Going up to window*)—I don't understand what's keeping her.—(*Throws open window and whistles*).

ROMNEY—If you don't begin to pay some attention to her—

TONY—(*Closing window*)—What's that?

ROMNEY—If she should come this afternoon——

TONY—Oh, she'll come.

ROMNEY—She's pretty late according to schedule now.—(*Goes up to window*).

TONY—(*Restlessly*)—I can't imagine what's keeping her—she promised me the finished manuscript this afternoon.

ROMNEY—(*Taking out handkerchief behind Tony's back*)—I say, if she should come—take a little notice of her—the girl, herself, I mean. Give her some thought—a poet should never lose an opportunity to study the species at first hand.

TONY—What do you want me to do—open her mouth and count her teeth?

ROMNEY—No—just open your eyes—and—count your pulse!

TONY—(*Holding out his hand*)—Good-bye! Good-bye! Sorry you must be going.

ROMNEY—I don't believe she's coming.

TONY—(*Turns to window suddenly, anxiously, throws it open and whistles again; then draws his head within but does not close window*)—Now what do you suppose has happened?

ROMNEY—(*Coming up to window*)—Hah! You'd miss her if anything happened to her.

TONY—Oh, shut up!—(*Whistles out window*).

ROMNEY—I shouldn't go on whistling like that— if she's ill she can't come—you'll only disturb her—or bring the police.

TONY—(*Anxiously*)—A healthy girl like that doesn't get ill over-night.

ROMNEY—You can't tell—she might have caught something—like the mumps or measles.

TONY—I tell you what! You go in next door and—and slyly inquire.

ROMNEY—And probably find her entertaining her young man in the parlor—

TONY—(*Snorting*)—Huh! It's not likely—not at all likely. —(*Suddenly sits at table, takes pen and writes*).

ROMNEY—Still, it's possible.—(*Surreptitiously waving his handkerchief out of window and dropping it*)—You, yourself, own that she's quite pretty.

TONY—(*Sharply*)—What's her name?

ROMNEY—Her name? Why—let me see. Christian or family name.

TONY—Both.

ROMNEY—Her Christian name? I wonder what that would be?

TONY—Her family name will do. What's that?

ROMNEY—Why—eh—Mudge or—or Fudge. Something that rhymes with "budge!"

TONY—Good Lord!

ROMNEY—Is it important?

TONY—Only that I'm writing a note to her. I was going to send it in to her, but if I don't know how to address it—

ROMNEY—Perhaps, if you give it to me, I'll be able to sneak it to her.

TONY—I'd be awfully much obliged.—(*Handing him sheet of paper*)—You may read it, if you like.

ROMNEY—(*Protesting*)—Oh!

TONY—I want you to—I don't like to say things behind people's backs.

ROMNEY—(*Reading letter*)—"My dear fairy god-mother: I am hoping that you are late simply because you have seen that eminent sentimentalist and distinguished old bore, D. Romney Evans—"—(*Looking up*)—Thanks!—(*Reading*)—"distinguished old bore—prowling about at my window. But, thank God, he is taking this note with him. Now the fearful thought occurs to me that you may be ill. If you are ill, send for a doctor at once—and

I think you had better have two or three nurses. If you are not ill, please remember that I am sitting here waiting for that manuscript which must go into the post to-night. If I do not hear from you within ten minutes, I shall do something absolutely desperate. What it will be, I haven't the slightest idea—I shall depend upon the inspiration of the moment. Oh, to be so forgotten by one's only fairy god-mother. Forlornly yours, The Cinderella-Man."

TONY—(*Handing Romney unaddressed envelope*)—You see how important it is.

ROMNEY—(*Folding letter and placing it in envelope*)—Yes, indeed. I'll do my best to get it to Miss Mudge.—(*Goes toward trap. He now has on coat and hat*).

TONY—Thank, you ever so much. Of course, you understand that you're not ALWAYS a bore by any means.—(*Follow Romney to trap*).

ROMNEY—(*Dryly*)—That's a comfort.

TONY—(*Contritely*)—Romney—you know that was all just my fun.—(*Impulsively holding out his hand*)—You're a bully old brick.

ROMNEY—(*Taking his hand, smiling*)—A good thing to stub your toe on.—(*From below L. comes the sound of WALTER NICOLL'S voice*).

WALTER—(*From below*)—That's all right—I tell you, he's an old friend. He'll want to see ME.—(*Romney and Tony start, surprised, look down trap. WALTER NICOLLS appears in the trap. He is dressed ultra-fashionably, silk hat on back of his head, canary-colored gloves, canary-colored gaiters, cutaway suit under overcoat, stick, etc.*)

WALTER—(*His head and shoulders showing above the stage*)—Hello, Tony—old scout!—(*Waving a hand as he ascends*).

TONY—(*Amazed—not pleased*)—Is that you—Spongey?—(*Romney looks from one to the other with puzzled amazement*).

WALTER—(*Holding hat across rail to Tony*)—Right ho!—(*Tony looks at Walter with mingled amusement and annoyance*).

ROMNEY—(*Cutting in*)—This young man's name was Nicolls—when I met him.

WALTER—(*Now up on the stage, offering his hand to Romney*)—So it was—and it hasn't changed since. "Spongey" is Tony's pet name for me. I know your map.—(*Snap fingers*)—I've got you now. Evans. That's you.

ROMNEY—(*Nods—glances at Tony*)—I didn't know you two were friends.

WALTER—Friends!—we went to Harvard together—for a

while. I got bored with it—quit. You stuck it out— didn't you Tony?

TONY—Yes; but look here, Spongey, I'm busting to know how you tracked me to my lair—as it were.

WALTER—(*To Romney*)—He's still the same little old highbrow. Five years—hadn't seen him for five years—(*To Tony*)—till a week ago—I was in the Fulton National extracting my monthly stipend—I saw you dash through one of those confounded revolving doors—I beat it after you—you left the door spinning at a hundred mile clip—I got all balled up with the door. Damn near broke my back. I lost you, old scout, but I got your address from the bank—and here I am.—(*Takes stage to R. looking about*).

TONY—Of course, you know, I'm awfully glad to see you and all that; but this is my busy day.

ROMNEY—Yes, Tony just fired me out—suppose we go together, Mr. Nicolls.

WALTER—Thanks. Thanks. Nice idea, but—

TONY—(*Breaking in, trying to lead Walter to trap*)—I'm up to my eyes in work, old man—drop around some evening—next month.—(*Romney glances surreptitiously, anxiously at window up* C.)

WALTER—(*Holding back*)—This isn't just a social call. No. Little deal on hand—won't wait.

TONY—(*Trying to lead Walter to trap*)—No use, Spongey—(*With significance*)—understand?

WALTER—(*Holding back*)—It isn't that—not what you think. Don't let me keep you, Mr. Evans.

ROMNEY—(*Taking Walter by the arm to lead him to trap*)—I've got my car outside—I'll tell the chauffeur to take you wherever you want to go. Come on.

TONY—It's a very smart car—let him drive you 'round the park.

WALTER—(*Breaking away from them, going R.C.*)—You tempt me—you tempt me.—(*To Romney*)—Tell your chauffeur to wait—I'll be down in ten minutes..

ROMNEY—It's now—or not at all.

WALTER—Sorry—but deals before delights.—(*With a bow to Romney*)—Hope to see you again, Mr. Evans—(*Sits R.C. Tony, disgusted, waves Romney to go*).

ROMNEY—(*Disguested at Walter; nods to him*)—By-by, Tony!

—(*Glances anxiously at window and exits down trap. Tony turns to Walter, standing over him*).

WALTER—(*Looking about*)—Quite a jolly little crow's nest!

TONY—Spongey, I'll give you thirty seconds to tell me what you want—so cut it short.

WALTER—Are you still writing music?

TONY—(*Impatiently*)—I never wrote music.

WALTER—Oh, yes you did—some pretty snappy stuff. Remember that dance you wrote for the Hasty Pudding—the—eh—"Fleet of Time."

TONY—The FLIGHT of Time.

WALTER—Zowie! It was a wild thing! Have you got a copy of it?

TONY—(*With emphatic disgust*)—NO!

WALTER—Couldn't you write it over again?

TONY—What for?

WALTER—Money!

TONY—Who'd pay good money for truck like that?

WALTER—I'll tell you. A friend of mine is giving a supper party—to bring out a little dancer he's discovered. He wants something original—full of pep—for her to dance to. And he's willing to pay for it. I thought of you—see? Now, get busy and write out that Flight of Time thing.

TONY—Couldn't do it—haven't written a note for years.

WALTER—You wouldn't have to write it. You could fake it up—PLAY it yourself—on the piano.

TONY—(*Coldly*)—That sort of stunt is not in my line.

WALTER—Oh, don't get up in the air. You'd be treated as a contributing artist—and you'd be paid TEN DOLLARS—which you would split with me—fifty-fifty. Get me?—(*Tony looks at him incredulously, then bursts out laughing*)—Where's the wheese in that? I stick them up for the price—I'm entitled to a fair compensation.—(*Tony laughs at him again*)—Think it's too much? Then you take sixty per cent—I'll take forty. You know I'm doing this just for the sake of old times. I could get a regular professional to do it.

TONY—(*Good-naturedly*)—Go to him, Spongey.—(*Urges Walter to rise*).

WALTER—(*Resisting—amazed*)— You're not going to turn down five or six dollars—when all you've got to do is beat the box for half an hour?

TONY—I'm tremendously flattered and obliged—but, no thank you!—(*Takes Walter by the arm and pulls him out of chair*)—Come on, Spongey—your time is up.

WALTER—(*Now on his feet, but resisting Tony's efforts to*

draw him to the trap)—Don't be such a nut! If you won't do it for yourself—do it for me.

TONY—(*Drawing him toward trap*)—Go get one of your professional friends.

WALTER—Oh, hell—I couldn't trust 'em to split with me. And, say, I'm temporarily broke. You do this for me and I'll do something big for you later.

TONY—The only thing you can do for me is to get out.—(*Drags Walter toward trap*).

WALTER—(*Resisting; now L.F.*)—You'll be sorry, Tony if you turn me down like this. I've got something on with a millionairess.

TONY—(*Taking Walter's hand and shaking it*)—Good luck to you, Spongey—and—GOOD-BYE!—(*Pushes him to trap*).

WALTER—(*Peevishly*)—You don't need to push me—I'm going.—(*Steps down into trap*).

TONY—By-by, Spongey. Take care of yourself.

WALTER—(*Stepping back on stage*)—Oh, say, Tony. I've got to go to a tea. Lend me the price of a taxi-cab.

TONY—(*Laughing and laying hold of Walter to pitch him downstairs*)—I knew a touch was coming—NOW YOU GO!—(*At that moment MARJORIE COMES TO THE WINDOW from R. with hood pulled over her head. Seeing Tony engaged, she darts away to R. Walter catches a glimpse of Marjorie at the window*).

WALTER—(*Excitedly, gaily*)—Ahhhhh! There's a skirt at your window.—(*Tries to go up stage past Tony*).

TONY—(*Sharply, as he forcibly holds him back*)— You're mistaken.

WALTER—(*Incredulously*)—No, no, Tony!—(*Trying to pass him*)—I tell you—I saw a skirt.

TONY—(*Holding him back*)—It was the maid—hanging up the clothes.

WALTER—Oh—oh you can't put that over on me. Something doing—something doing!

TONY—(*Flinging Walter back to the trap*)—If you don't get out of here—I'll promise you a free ride in an ambulance.

WALTER—(*Protesting*)—Don't muss me up.

TONY—(*Fishing a coin out of his pocket*)—Then scoot! Here's ten cents—take a Fifth Avenue bus.

WALTER—(*Taking coin*)—That's an idea.—(*Going down trap*)—So long—you sly old highbrow—with your skirt on the roof.—(*As he disappears down trap*)—Maid hanging up clothes. Something doing! Something doing! (*Sound of door closing*

below. Tony snaps his teeth in anger, and goes quickly up to moment. It begins to snow outside. He closes the window, turns window, raises sash, looks out to R. Whistles. Stays there a away from it disconsolately. Then he turns back to the window. The snow is now falling thickly. He is afraid that the snow will keep Marjorie from returning. He goes to the curtain in the L.U. corner, and takes an old umbrella from behind it. He brings umbrella down C. and opens it. Its broken ribs and torn cover distress him. At that moment, MARJORIE APPEARS AT THE WINDOW, carrying manuscript in a big envelope and basket. She peeps in, and making sure that he is alone, she taps on the pane. Tony turns with a start, throws the umbrella in the corner, runs up to the window and opens it).

MARJORIE—I came to the window a few minutes ago—there was someone here.

TONY—Yes, yes, he's gone. Thank God you've come at last.—(*He assists her in through the window, relieving her of the basket*).

MARJORIE—(*Innocently*)—Why—what's the matter?

TONY—You're so fearfully late.

MARJORIE—Am I late?

TONY—(*Pointing out window at clock*)—Late? Look at the time. It's nearly four.

MARJORIE—(*As though surprised*)—So it is. But you had a visitor.

TONY—Only for a second or two—I expected you at THREE.

MARJORIE—You were anxious?

TONY—You're always so punctual—I thought you might be ill.

MARJORIE—I—I was finishing your manuscript. Here it is.—*Hands manuscript to him*).

TONY—(*Delighted*)—Oh, you've finished it—all?

MARJORIE—Yes.—(*Takes basket down L. and sets it on trunk*).

TONY—(*Taking manuscript out of envelope*)—That's awfully good of you! Now I'll be able to get it off tonight.—(*Goes to table up stage and prepares to edit manuscript.*)

MARJORIE—(*Taking off cloak and shaking snow from it down trap*)—So—so you were the least bit worried about me?

TONY—(*Ignoring her remark, examining manuscript*)—It looks fine—doesn't it?—So professional.

MARJORIE—(*Hanging her cloak over rail*)—I asked you a question.

TONY—(*Now seated at table, preoccupied with manuscript*)—I beg your pardon.

MARJORIE—(*Standing L.C. looking at him*)—I asked you if you were the least bit worried about me?

TONY—(*Preoccupied*)—Certainly I was worried about you—why shouldn't I be?

MARJORIE—(*Slowly approaching table*)—When did you begin to be worried?

TONY—When you didn't come.

MARJORIE—Right away—at half after three?

TONY—(*Picking up pen as a signal that he is going to work. Speaking patronizingly*)—Yes—yes—right away—immediately.

MARJORIE—(*Now at table*)—Were you—very much worried?

TONY—(*Protesting*)—My dear Miss Mudge!—(*She looks at him in comic surprise*)—Yes, I shall call you by your ill-fitting surname whenever you distract me from my work. Now, like a dear, good fairy god-mother go get your knitting and leave me to curry-comb my masterpiece.

MARJORIE—You could have answered me in half as many words.

TONY—(*Reprimandingly*)—Miss Mudge.—(*With a gesture, he waves her away from the table.*)

(*MARJORIE backs away from the table, watching him as he begins to read the manuscript. Seeing that he does not propose to pay any attention to her, she goes to the trunk, picks up his hat and coat and hangs them under the curtain up L. Then she returns to the trunk, opens it, takes out a dainty work-basket and one of Tony's shirts. Then she goes R.C., places basket and shirt on the camp chair, carefully carries chair so as to make no noise to the L. side of the oil stove. She places chair so that she may have full view of Tony. Sits in chair and proceeds to sew buttons on the shirt Silence for a moment as she sews and watches Tony reading the manuscript*).

TONY—(*Without looking up*)—This is wonderfully clean copy—not an error so far.—(*Marjorie beams. Silence again. Then with a snort*)—Hah! I never wrote "luffing." I wrote "laughing."

MARJORIE—Why—where's that?—(*Puts down her work and goes to Tony*).

TONY—In act one. This piece of business: "Kiri-Sawa enters luffing."

MARJORIE—(*Leaning on his shoulder, looking over manu-*

script)—Oh! That! I—I thought he was intended to be intoxicated —that he came in luffing—(*Illustrates*)—like a sail boat.

TONY—(*Nodding*)—I s-e-e. He would come in like that—so he would. That's better.—(*Marjorie goes to the trunk, opens it, takes out kettle and fills it from a water bottle, which stands on floor upper side of trunk. Tony goes on reading the manuscript. Marjorie sets the kettle on top of the stove with a care to make no noise, and is about to resume her sewing, when Tony speaks*).

TONY—Here's a verse that has never satisfied me.

MARJORIE—You mustn't get so finicky about it—or you'll never finish.

TONY—(*Running his hand desperately through his hair*)—I can't let this go.—(*Marjorie goes up to table*).

TONY—It's the song of the guard on the battlement.—(*Hands sheet of manuscript to her*)—The first verse.

MARJORIE—(*Reading*)

"The voice of the watch is a spell,
He paces his beat——"

TONY—That's rotten! I only put in "spell" to make it rhyme with "well."

MARJORIE—Wait a minute! I've got it—I think. How would this do?

"All's well!
Is the call of the sentinel."

TONY—(*Jumping up*)—Oh! That's bully!—(*Reaching across table and taking sheet from her, reading and chanting*)—

"All's well! All's well! All's well! (Three times)
Is the SONG of the sentinel,
Who paces his beat
Through rain and sleet
From roll of taps till morning sun;
Each hour cries, from sun to sun—
All's well!"

Ah! Fine! What?—(*Sits and picks up pen*).

MARJORIE—And at the END you should have three "All's wells!" The first by the tenor on the stage—the second by the baritone at some distance—and the third by the bass away off—like this:—(*Illustrates, her own voice*)—All's well!—(*Illustrates, manly voice*)—All's well!—(*Illustrates, low and gruff*)—All's well!

TONY—(*Applauding*)—Thank you very much, indeed. That's an inspiration. I'll put it in, in ink.—(*Sits and goes to work*).

(*Marjorie returns to the camp chair, picks up her work, sits and sews. She finishes the button, folds the shirt lovingly, lays it*

in her lap, gives it an affectionate pat. Then she takes a stocking with an enormous hole in it from the basket. The hole puzzles her —she does not know how to darn a stocking anyway; but she goes gravely at it in the most incompetent way. She is happy. She begins unconsciously to hum the music of Tony's song, which she sang in Act I.)

TONY—(*Looking up*)—How can I concentrate my mind when you are singing at the top of your voice?

MARJORIE—I'm sorry—but I was feeling so—so happy.

TONY—I'll have to send you home, if you don't stop being so violently happy.

MARJORIE—I'll try not to make so much noise about it.

TONY—Thank you!—(*Resumes work. Then he looks up*)—What have you got to be so happy about, anyway? No—no! Don't answer me! You'll start an engrossing conversation.—(*Marjorie sits still as a mouse, sewing. After a moment's silence*)—This is a ripping act—only I don't like the finish of it—when the Princess Wisteria slaps Prince Hollybrook's face and runs away.

MARJORIE—But he was very impudent to kiss her—right in front of her own palace door—ANYONE MIGHT HAVE SEEN THEM.

TONY—Anyone might have seen them? What's that got to do with it?

MARJORIE—Everything! That's why she was so angry.

TONY—I thought it was because he kissed her.

MARJORIE—Not because he KISSED her—but because he did it PUBLICLY.

TONY—By Jove, you know more about my heroine than I do myself.

MARJORIE—Goose! She couldn't possible be angry—just because he kissed her—she loves him already.

TONY—(*Rising and coming down to R. side of oil stove*)—Oh, you're mistaken! It's not till the last act that she loves him.

MARJORIE—She loves him in the SECOND—but she doesn't SAY anything about it until the last.

TONY—You're sure of that?

MARJORIE—Positive.

TONY—If that's the case—then there should be some expression of it at the end of ACT II—after the slapping.—(*Pondering*)—How would that be? You'll have to help me work this out.—(*Suddenly*)—You're the Princess.

MARJORIE—Yes.—(*Rises, puts down work-basket*)—And you're the Prince.

TONY—Y-e-s. Come down here.—(*They come down stage*

L.C.)—Now—I say—so and so, and so and so, and so and so—kiss you!—(*Tony tentatively goes through the pantomime, all but actually kissing her. She blinks her eyes, a little excited and nervous at this point, standing very stiffly*)—Now you slap me.—(*She gives him a gentle pat on the cheek*)—Oh, HARDER—I've got to get into the spirit of the thing.

MARJORIE—But—but you—you didn't really kiss—me.

TONY—(*Laughing*)—All right, we'll start all over again.

MARJORIE—(*Hurriedly, embarrassed*)—Oh, I didn't mean that—I was only explaining why I didn't really slap—(*Tony makes a movement to kiss her. She slaps him*).

TONY—That's better!—(*Both laugh*)—Now you run into the palace.—(*Points to trunk. Marjorie jumps up on the trunk*)—Oh! That's the idea. Stay there! The Prince starts away laughing.—(*Goes to trap and starts to descend*)—The Princess appears at the window above him and—hearing him laughing—throws down the flower pots at him. Curtain.

MARJORIE—(*Leaning over the rail toward Tony*)—Do you think that's the way she'd express her affection?

TONY—It would be pretty effective.

MARJORIE—Come back.—(*He returns*)—Listen to me.—(*She jumps down from trunk*)—When the Princess runs into the palace, she calls her two giant Nubian slaves. She says to them—very angrily—"Kill that man"—and runs up to the window—(*Jumping up on trunk again*)—You are going away laughing.—(*Tony starts down through the trap*)—The slaves rush out—they seize you—they are about to slay you—when I scream from the window—"Don't you dare hurt that man or my father will feed you to the tigers." Curtain.

TONY—(*Reaches up to her, offering his hand*)—That's immense.—(*She shakes his hand*)—The action, the psychology—is right—stunning! All it wants is the proper dialogue—the lines.—(*Comes up on stage*).

MARJORIE—(*Beaming*)—You'll keep that in about the tigers—won't you?

TONY—(*Going to the table up stage*)—Surely. It's such a nice, lady-like touch.—(*Sits at table and picks up pen*).

MARJORIE—(*Jumping down from trunk and going to table*)—It makes me so happy to be able to help you even the least little bit.

TONY—(*Patronizingly*)—You've helped me a great deal. Now—(*Waving her away from the table*)—I'll let you know when I want you to help me again.—(*Prepares to write*).

MARJORIE—You—you won't forget that they're NUBIAN slaves?

TONY—No—I've got it all down on my mental cuff. (*He starts to write. She starts to speak, checks herself with an effort, blinks, looks at him, gives a little sigh, looks out the window, notes the hour with a start, and turning, coming quickly but noiselessly down L.C. She takes the cushions from the trunk, lays them on the floor above the trunk, folds the couch-cover and sets it on top of the cushions; opens the trunk, takes out a white table-cloth and hangs it over the rail. Then she carefully picks up the folding table, which stands below the trunk and carries it C. below the stove. With an eye on Tony, she carefully snaps the legs of the table into position, and sets it up; spreads it with white cloth; goes to trunk and takes out china, knives, forks and spoons and arranges them for two people on the table. All the while moving about quickly noiselessly, so as not to disturb the author. Then she brings the basket from down L., opens it and takes out half of a baked ham, some salad, a bottle of olives, a pot of jam, a plate of sandwiches, a cake. Now she takes the kettle from stove and brews the tea. Accidently, she knocks a spoon onto the floor*).

TONY—(*Looking up, impatiently*)—Upon my word. How can I work when you're making such a clatter!

MARJORIE—But it's time you stopped, anyway—and got your tea.

TONY—But how can I get this job finished, when you're always bothering to feed me?

MARJORIE—(*Warmly*)—You can't work without being—fed.

TONY—(*Warmly*)—I can't work when I'm stuffed!

MARJORIE—(*Getting angry*)—If you—you stuff yourself—it isn't my fault.

TONY—(*Angrily*)—I don't stuff myself. It's you—you're forever making me eat. Why, you've kept me so stuffed for the past week that—that half the time my brains have utterly refused to work.

MARJORIE—(*Angrily, stamping her foot*)—It isn't true! They've worked better than ever—you said so yourself.

TONY—Now you've got me so upset I can't work.

MARJORIE—I'm glad of it.

TONY—(*Angrily*)—Don't you realize that I've got to get this thing done.

MARJORIE—(*Angrily*)—You'd finish it much better if you stopped and had your tea first.

TONY—For heaven's sake let me finish now, while I'm in the mood.

MARJORIE—You're not in the mood now. And the tea will spoil.

TONY—Oh, hang the tea! Here I am, trying my best to keep myself in the atmosphere of romance—and you keep dragging me out of it into the commonplace of material things. If you'll leave me alone for five minutes, I'll be through.—(*Tony doggedly resumes reading the manuscript. Marjorie looks at him, the tears starting in her eyes. She turns away, goes to the upper side of trunk, sinks down on cushions, which are on the floor, puts her head in her arms, her arms on the edge of the trunk and sobs silently. After a moment, Tony finishes his manuscript*).

TONY—(*Without looking up, as he makes a neat pile of his manuscript*)—There. It's done. Didn't have to change a word in the last pages. Awfully good typewriting. Do you know, you could make your living—(*Looks up, sees her in a miserable little huddle at the trunk. Jumps up alarmed*)—Why—why what's the matter?—(*Comes down to her quickly*)—What's—what's wrong?—(*Marjorie does not respond. Tony is puzzled, anxious, alarmed. Ruffles up his hair, desperately*)—I must have hurt you—somehow! But you know I didn't mean to. It's my damned temperament. When I get working I'm not a fit companion for a—a pre-historic monster.—(*Drops on one knee beside her, touching her shoulder*)—I'm terribly sorry. I'd rather cut my tongue out than say one word that would hurt you. And you've been so good to me—helped me so much. I'd never have finished my opera, if it hadn't been for you and the way you've looked after me. Really, it makes me ill to think that I should have hurt you in the slightest way. You, who have been so wonderful to me—made me so happy. I don't know what I should do WITHOUT you! I'm so impatient, so restless all day until you come. Why, you're just the dearest little pal in the world. And when you're gone, I'm terribly, terribly lonely—and the only thing that cheers me then is the thought that you are coming again to-morrow.—(*Marjorie puts out her hand to him. He takes it eagerly but tenderly and holds it in silence for a moment. She looks up at him tearfully. He speaks with a gush of feeling*)—Your poor little thing—you've been crying.

MARJORIE—(*Wiping her eyes on her apron, as she takes a few convulsive breaths*)—No—no I haven't.

TONY—I'm a beast.

MARJORIE—No—no you're not. It's all—all right now.

TONY—You—you forgive me?—(*She smiles and nods. He*

holds out his hands. She takes them. He helps her to her feet)—Ah, that's like my dear, little fairy god-mother. Now, what do you say to tea?—(*Leads her to the table down C. Sees work-basket in chair. Picks it up and lifts out sock*)—By Jove! You've been darning my socks.

MARJORIE—(*Smiling at him, lovingly*)—Y-e-s.

TONY—(*Examining the sock*)—That's a very beautiful piece of work.

MARJORIE—(*Pleased*)—You—you think it's all right?

TONY—Marvellous! I don't see how you do it. I've tried it, myself.—(*Places work-basket on trunk*)—Now, you sit down.—(*Places camp chair at L. side of table. She sits. He goes up to table, gets chair and brings it down R. side of small table. Meanwhile she watches him with a sigh. He sits opposite her*)—You know, I'm famished. Everything looks so good.

MARJORIE—(Pouring tea)—I'm afraid this tea's too strong.

TONY—Not for me. But perhaps you'd better have a little hot water in yours.—(Jumps up and gets kettle from stove, pours water into Marjorie's cup and puts kettle back on stove)—That's one of the handsomest hams I've ever seen.—(Sits at table)—I'm beginning to feel like a party. You don't know what a relief it is to me to get that job off my chest.—(Three distinct knocks heard below; Marjorie starts)—It's Primrose! He's crazy about you. I'll have to let him come up for a minute.—(Calling)—Come in.

MARJORIE—(Handing Tony cup of tea)—Anyone so good to you as he is—(Primrose appears through trap, smiling, apologetic, *a little embarrassed*).

PRIMROSE—I begs pardon—I—I was comin' up to—to see if the oil stove was burnin' all right.

TONY—I think you'll find that it's behaving itself perfectly.

PRIMROSE—(*Shuffling toward the oil stove, now above the tea-table, his hands folded beatifically in front of him, bobbing to Marjorie*)—How-de-doo, Miss. I hopes you're feelin' as good as usual.—(*Stands there, beaming at her*).

MARJORIE—Yes, thank you! And how are you, Primrose?

PRIMROSE—If I was feelin' bad—which I ain't—it'd cure me—the sight of you, Miss, and Mr. Quintard sittin' here together at the table. It do look so cheery and affable—like a little man and his wife.—(*Tony bursts out laughing. Then looks at Marjorie, who is so embarrassed that she puts a dozen lumps of sugar in her tea cup*)—I often says to myself—"Now wouldn't it be nice if them two—"

TONY—(*Suddenly offering Primrose the plate of sandwiches*)—Have a sandwich! Have a sandwich!

PRIMROSE—(*Taking a sandwich gingerly*)—Thank you—very kindly, sir.

MARJORIE—(*Cutting HUGE piece of cake*)—And—and a piece of cake.—(*Offers it to Primrose*).

PRIMROSE—(*Taking the cake*)—Thank you, Miss. As I was sayin'——

MARJORIE—(*Suddenly*)—Won't you have some tea?

PRIMROSE—If you'd be so—(*Primrose stops short, his attention attracted by Tony, who shakes his head violently and waves him to go*)—so—kind—as—as——What is it you're wantin', sir?

TONY—Nothing. Nothing. I was only thinking that the Great She-Bear—(*Primrose starts uneasily, with a glance at the trap*)—Well, you know, she's likely to be looking for you.

PRIMROSE—I'm obliged to you for thinkin' of it. She's in a fierce humor today. I guess I'd better be goin'.—(*Waves cake and sandwich*)—Thank you, very much, Miss.—(*Bobs to her and shuffles to trap*).

MARJORIE—I hope you'll come up again tomorrow—at tea time.

PRIMROSE—If you don't mind—thank you—thank you—good-day, Miss.—(*Primrose descends through trap. Sound of door closing below. Tony leans back in his chair and looks at Marjorie, who is drinking tea. He looks at her seriously, studying her, very much interested. Presently she looks up. She is surprised at his serious, steady look. Her eyes widen, she smiles a little, questioningly, then becomes embarrassed*).

TONY—(*After a pause*)—Do you know, you've told me very little about yourself.—(*She glances up at him for an instant, wonderingly. After a pause*)—You're almost as much alone in the world as I am—aren't you?

MARJORIE—(*Without looking up; in a subdued voice*)—Almost.

TONY—I don't often think of things like this; but if I should die tonight it wouldn't affect a single soul.—(*Marjorie keeps her head down*)—And if anything should happen to you—is there anyone who would care very much?

MARJORIE—(*Her head down—shaking it*)—No! Not NOW.

TONY—(*Starting*)—Ah, but there WAS someone.—(*Marjorie nods*)—Recently?

MARJORIE—(*Head down—subdued voice*)—My—mother.

TONY—(*Surprised, touched*)—Ooooh! I—I didn't know. I'm

awfully sorry. It's been a long time—now—since I lost my mother, but I still miss her. So I know how—how sad and lonely you must be.

MARJORIE—(*Looking up at him, her mouth quivering a little. Smiling the least bit*)—I try—to be happy—(*With a sigh*)—And sometimes—I succeed.

TONY—It's worse—at night—isn't it?

MARJORIE—Y-e-s.

TONY—(*After a pause*)—My mother made such a damned baby of me.

MARJORIE—Of course she did!

TONY—Yours must have made a—a bigger baby of you.

MARJORIE—I don't know—but I can't get used to going to sleep without having her tuck me in.—(*Pause*)—And I—I put her to bed myself for her last—last sleep—away—away over there—all alone—in France—and I'm here.—(*She gives a little sob and puts her face in her hands. Tony is very much touched. He doesn't know what to do. He feels in his pocket for a handkerchief, takes out a clean but torn handkerchief, offers it to her. She pays no attention. He touches her. She looks up at him, takes handkerchief and dries her eyes*).

TONY—(*Suddenly*)—Do you know anything about marrying? —(*Startled, she looks up at him in wonder. He stands there looking down at her, directly into her eyes with growing admiration and affection*).

TONY—(*Slowly, subdued tone*)—You've—got—the—most—wonderful—eyes.—(*Marjorie drops her eyes and sighs; her head droops. Tony looks down at the top of her head for a moment; then slowly puts out a hand as though to touch her; hesitates, withdraws hand. Now he puts his hands in his pockets, takes out a few coins—all he has—looks at them, then looks about the room at his poor possessions, sighs, puts the coins back into his pocket, turns and goes slowly up to the window. Marjorie looks after him, puzzled. He is now looking out at the window. After a moment, he turns to his writing table, sees his manuscript, picks it up*)—I wonder of this thing's any good.—(*Looking at the manuscript, pondering*)—"*The Getaway of Dreams.*"

MARJORIE—(*Surprised*)—The Getaway of Dreams?

TONY—Didn't I tell you? That's the title I've given it—came to me last night.

MARJORIE—(*Rising*)—It's an inspiration!—(*Starts up stage toward him*).

TONY—You never heard of a man marrying on "inspiration."

—(*Marjorie stops short up L.C.*)—It can't be done.—(*Throws manuscript on table*)—All I could offer a girl today would be a little—inspiration! Hah!

MARJORIE—Wouldn't it be a—a sensible idea then if you were to—to marry a girl who had some—some money of her own?

TONY—(*Turning on her warmly*)—I tell you—I wouldn't marry a girl with money.

MARJORIE—But—but some awfully nice girls come that way.

TONY—Are you trying to interest me in the Princess?

MARJORIE—It isn't fair for you to be so prejudiced against her. She's the same sort of a girl that—that I am.

TONY—(*Impatiently.*)—Oh— you're worth a million princesses.

MARJORIE—T-thank you.—(*Tony looks at her with admiration. She looks away from him—down stage. Her eyes fall on the kettle. She starts for it suddenly*)—Won't you have some hot tea? —(*She takes the kettle from the stove, goes to the tea table and begins to brew tea*).

TONY—(*Contemplatively, coming down R.*)—If it SHOULD get the prize——

MARJORIE——I'm sure it will—it must.—(*Places kettle back on stove*).

TONY—(*Eagerly*)—You have great faith in it—haven't you?

MARJORIE—It can't fail.—(*Resumes her seat L. side of tea-table*).

TONY—In that case I should have ten thousand dollars.—(*Sits R. side of table. Marjorie is picking up hic cup*)—A man could marry on ten thousand—couldn't he?

MARJORIE—Oh, yes, indeed!—(*Looks into tea-pot*).

TONY—(*Leaning across the table*)—And my prospects would be mighty good—especially if the opera made a hit.

MARJORIE—(*Pouring tea*)—I think your prospects are awfully good—now.

TONY—But a man has got to have some ready money. He can't ask a girl to take chances.

MARJORIE—(*Handing Tony a cup of tea*)—A girl is always glad to—to take chances—when she's sure that she's taking them with the—right man.

TONY—Ah, that's the marvellous thing about them. But a man doesn't like to ask them to take chances.

MARJORIE—You mustn't treat us as though we were perishable freight—though we like to have you think of us that way—sometimes.

TONY—It would be the most wonderful adventure—

MARJORIE—To sail into life—with nothing but love for a boat.

TONY—But you can't sail without wind.—(*They look at each other for a moment*)—But, by Jove—that opera of mine shall raise the wind for me.—"The Getaway of Dreams."

MARJORIE—The Getaway of Dreams!—(*Picking up her tea-cup, rising*)—To its success.—(*Tony rises, tea-cup in hand*).

TONY—To you, little fairy god-mother.—(*As they clink cups across the table—the GREAT SHE-BEAR suddenly appears through the trap*).

SHE-BEAR—(*Thundering in anger*)—So this is the sort of thing that's going on in my house.—(*Tony is dumbfounded. Marjorie is frightened. She drops her cup, and puts out a hand to Tony. They rise. He takes her hand and drawing her across to him back of table, holds her hand protectingly. The She-Bear pours out the following furiously*)—What sort of a house do you think I keep? It's respectable—respectable—I tell you. And I won't have a lodger of mine carousing in his room with a "chicken." Do you hear? With a "chicken"—smuggled in the devil knows how. Where do you think you are? This isn't the tenderloin. This is a respectable house—and—(*Pointing to Marjorie*)—you'll get out of it—for good and all—(*Taking violet scarf from under her apron and throwing it down by trunk*)—or out he goes.

TONY—(*Trembling*)—Get out of my room!

SHE-BEAR—(*Furiously*)—That strumpet goes!

TONY—(*Darting toward She-Bear*)—Another word—and I'll pitch you down those stairs!—(*The She-Bear looks at Tony, quails a little before his furious glance, growls inarticulately*).

TONY—Go-o!—(*The She-Bear goes down through the trap*)—I leave this house tonight!

(*The She-Bear disappears. Marjorie is standing R.C. above the tea-table and the stove, her hands clasped on her breast, almost petrified. Tony is standing dazed down L.C. Sound of a door closing below. He turns slowly and looks at Marjorie. They look at each other piteously, heart-broken. Their paradise has been shattered. The She-Bear's evil thought of them stands between them*).

(*It has been growing late in the afternoon. The light is going. It is now dusky outside the window. The snow is falling again*).

(*With a great sigh, Tony takes Marjorie's cloak from the rail, goes to her, and gently puts it about her shoulders. Then he goes back to the trunk and picks up her work-basket, looks into it, slowly takes out his socks and drops them on the trunk. Carries the work-*

basket to her. She takes it; looks at him tearfully. He goes up to the window and opens it. She goes slowly up to him. She holds out a hand to him. He takes it, presses it warmly. She draws closer to him. It is evident that she would fall into his arms. He gently leads to the window. He helps her up on the box and out through the window).

(He still has her hand, now clasped in his across the window sill. He stoops and kisses her hand, then lets it go; and slowly closes the window—and fastens it).

(She stands outside, the snow falling about her, looking in at him with a pleading expression. He shuts his eyes and turns to the writing table. Her hand goes to her face. She disappears from the window to R.)

(He pauses at the table, slowly takes up the manuscript, comes down to the trunk and pulls it out from rail. He opens the trunk slowly and drops the manuscript into it. He sees Marjorie's violet scarf. He sinks down beside the trunk, taking the scarf in his hands. His head droops, until it rests on the edge of the open trunk).

CURTAIN.

ACT IV

(A Week Later. Night.)

SCENE:

(*Drawing room of CANER'S house as in Act I, but with the furniture partially rearranged. On the L. the davenport has been moved so that it now stands with its length up and down the stage facing the fireplace. The big table stands at its back. One of the huge throne chairs has been brought down L.C. facing the audience and near the table. There is a high foot-stool in front of the throne chair. The rest of the furniture remains as placed in Act I. There are flowers on the tables, on the chimney piece, on the music stand and the piano in profusion. There are big handsome sofa-pillows on the davenport, the throne chairs, and on the settee below the piano. There are two "Safe White" bird cages of ivory-white enamel on high standards with canaries in them. One stand by the windows down stage R., another below the fireplace L.*)

(*MARJORIE is discovered standing at the window R. looking out and upward as at the close of Act I. She wears a fluffy, white evening dress. She is pale*).

(*BLODGETT, the butler, enters C.E.*)

BLODGETT—(*Looking about for Marjorie; then discovering her*)—Miss Marjorie.—(*She starts, looks around at him*)—Dr. Thayer has come to see you, Miss.

MARJORIE—(*Quietly*)—I don't want to see him.—(*Marjorie goes behind the curtains at the windows. DR. THAYER enters C.E. from R. He wears a smart cutaway and striped trousers. He looks about for Marjorie. Blodgett points to the curtains R. and exits C.E. to L.*)

THAYER—(*Going toward the windows R.*)—I've had patients hate me so that they pulled the bed-clothes over their heads at the sight of me, but I've never had one wrap herself up in the drawing-room curtains. Come now, stick out your tongue at me and I'll be satisfied—(*He waits a moment, then parts the curtains, takes Marjorie by the arm and draws her out*).

MARJORIE—(*Quietly*)—Please leave me alone. I'm not your patient.

THAYER—Oh yes you are. I'm the house physician. I tend everything in it, from the Great Mogul himself, down to the cat.

MARJORIE—We haven't a cat—any more. I gave it away—it frightened the canaries.

THAYER—But we have a kitten. And the Great Mogul telephoned me that the kitten is sick.

MARJORIE—If you mean me—I'm not sick.

THAYER—You're not feeling very frisky—you've lost your appetite—you won't go out, even in your brand-new, big, red car.

MARJORIE—(*Contemptuously*)—A red car——

THAYER—Ah! You don't like the color of it. We'll have it changed. What do you say to a nice sky blue?

MARJORIE—I don't want a car. I don't want any of those horrid, expensive things. I don't want to be rich. I want to be poor.—(*She goes down L. to bird cage and begins to feed the canary*).

THAYER—Then you are sick.—(He follows her)—Now, this loss of appetite—we'll have to stimulate your desire for food a little—humor your palate—and at the same time make things easy for your tummy.—(*Taking out prescription book and fountain pen*)—To begin with—I'm going to give you a tonic—something very pleasant to taste—(*Writing a prescription*)—Your father says you ate no dinner tonight. I'm going to order you a supper—to be eaten on top of this nice cocktail I'm mixing for you.—(*Hands her prescription. She looks at it*)—Now, here's what you must have: Clam-broth—clear; white meat of the chicken; asparagus tips on toast; and, if you like, you may have vanilla ice cream and lady fingers. No tea—no coffee. I put you on your honor.—(*Taking prescription from her*)—You'd better let me have that. I'll leave it at the drug store myself and have it sent around to you in a jiffy.—(*Holding out his hand to her*)—Now, you're going to be a good girl and take it—aren't you?

MARJORIE—(*Listlessly. Politely taking his hand*)—Thank you for coming.

THAYER—Pleasure, I'm sure.—(*Going up C.*)—I'll drop in tomorrow. My regards to your father. Good-night.

MARJORIE—Good-night!—(*Thayer exits C.D. to R. Marjorie sinks down on settee below piano, her head in her hands for a moment; then rises and goes to windows R., stands there, looking out and upward*)

"Out of his heart he builds a home."'

(*After a moment, she crosses to the big table back of davenport L.C., opens drawer and takes out Tony's original manuscript written in ink, climbs into throne chair L.C. and begins to read it. BLODGETT enters C.E. from L. much disturbed; comes down C.*)

BLODGETT—Miss Marjorie, that old person from next door —is here again. He insists—he must see you.

MARJORIE—(*Eagerly*)—Yes! Yes! I want to see him.

BLODGETT—I don't know what your father would say——

MARJORIE—(*Firmly*)—You know what I say—I want to see him—at once.—(*Blodgett sighs, shakes his head, goes up C.E. and beckons off L. Marjorie leans over to the big table and lays the manuscript on it; then half kneeling on the chair looks eagerly toward C.E.*

(*PRIMROSE enters C.E. He wears the same shabby clothes as in Acts II and III under an old overcoat, and carries a battered derby hat; but his face is clean and his hair carefully brushed up for this visit to Marjorie.*)

(*BLODGETT looks at him with great scorn. Primrose returns his look with a timid, awesome glance. Then his eye falls on Marjorie. His face brightens. He bobs to her*).

MARJORIE—Come here, Primrose. You may go, Blodgett.—(*Blodgett exits haughtily C.E. now ignoring Primrose, who nods after him with satisfaction, and shuffles down C.*)—Oh, I'm glad to see you—I've been so anxious—(*Primrose takes from his overcoat pocket a very small bunch of violets. They are a little crumpled, but still fresh. He gives them a shake, to open them up, and offers them to Marjorie*).

PRIMROSE—Mr. Quintard says to me—"You go across the roof and leave 'em at her window."—(*Marjorie takes the violets with a grateful smile, holds them to her nose. She is all but crying over them now*).

PRIMROSE—But he didn't know I was goin' to see you, Miss. He doesn't know I've EVER seen you since—he moved that night.

MARJORIE—He's—he's—quite comfortable—now—with your sister-in-law?

PRIMROSE—With my sister-in-law's AUNT. Yes, Miss—it's a merry clean little garret he's got there—but I do miss the sight o' your curtains an' fixin's.

MARJORIE—He shouldn't have sent them back to me!—(*She carefully places violets in bosom of dress*).

PRIMROSE—You know him, Miss. But, as he says, there's compensations: He's got a elegant old grey rat that goes with the garret.

MARJORIE—Oh!

PRIMROSE—Nothin' to be afraid of—it's so tame and toothless —it laps milk out o' his hand—it does. Now what it is he calls the beast?—Uncle Sam—on account of its long grey whiskers. And he's

got a fine view from his window—at night. He can see one o' them big electric advertising signs. It's a bottle of beer, pourin' itself into a glass.

MARJORIE—(*With a smile*)—That must be interesting.

PRIMROSE—It's so natural—it makes me thirsty to look at it.

MARJORIE—(*Climbing out of chair, turning to table*)—You must give me his address. I want to return his manuscript.

PRIMROSE—(*Waiting until she takes pencil and card from the table drawer*)—It's 417½ West Spring, Miss. (*She writes, then takes a five dollar bill from the drawer and offers it to Primrose*)—Thank you, Miss — very kindly, but it's no use!—(*Refuses the money*).

MARJORIE—Why not?

PRIMROSE—You know that ten dollars you give me for him? Well—I tried to get him to borrow it off me—and he wouldn't; and off my sister-in-law's aunt—and he wouldn't! But the next day I got an idea. You know when people die their names is put in the papers, and sometimes there's a bit of poetry goes with 'em. So I says to Mr. Quinard: "A friend of mine has just died and his wife'll give you ten dollars if you'll write a piece of poetry about him tellin' what a great man he was and what loss to his family—so she can stick it in the paper." He bit, Miss—he did. He's got the ten dollars—he earned it. I've got the poetry—and every time I read it, it makes me cry. I'm goin' to keep it, and have it put in the paper when I croak.

MARJORIE—What a dear old fraud you are.

PRIMROSE—Thank you, Miss.

MARJORIE—You're so ingenious—you could find a way to make him take this.

PRIMROSE—But he ain't needin' it now, Miss. The rent ain't much and he don't eat nothin' to speak of.—(*Blodgett enters C.E. with a bottle of medicine wrapped in white paper and red string, as it comes from the drug store*).

MARJORIE—(*Anxiously*)—His appetite is poor—you say?

PRIMROSE—Werry poor! You wouldn't believe it, but he even turns up his nose at boiled beef and cabbage—he don't care nothing for food any more.

BLODGETT—(*Coming down to L. side of Marjorie*)—Your medicine, Miss Marjorie.—(*Hands it to her*).

MARJORIE—(Taking it)—Thank you.—(To Primrose)—We'll have to stimulate Mr. Quintard's desire for food a little and at the same time make things easy for his tummy.—(*She unwraps bottle,*

looks at label, takes paper cutter and scratches her name off the label).

PRIMROSE—Just as you say, Miss.

MARJORIE—To begin with—we'll give him this tonic—(*Hands bottle to Primrose*)—Tell him it is pleasant to the taste. The directions are there—I've only scratched off my name.

PRIMROSE—Thank you, Miss.—(*Puts bottle in his pocket*).

MARJORIE—Now we must humor his palate. For supper tonight, we'll give him clam broth—clear, white meat of the chicken, asparagus tips on toast, vanilla ice cream and lady fingers.

PRIMROSE—But where am I goin' to get 'em, Miss?

MARJORIE—Come back in an hour—I'll have his supper ready for you. You could take it to Mr. Quintard in a basket, couldn't you?

PRIMROSE—I could, Miss—only I'm afeared the Great She-Bear—(*Marjory winces at the mention of the "Great She-Bear"*)—Won't let me off.

MARJORIE—Then you must leave her. I intended to speak to you about that before. I want to engage you as my footman—(*Primrose clasps his hands in ecstacy. He is on the point of crying*)—to run errands for me, bathe the canaries—I feed them—water the gold fish—exercise the dogs, and keep the squirrels from fighting. I don't know what the wages of a footman are—but you shall have them.

PRIMROSE—(*In tears*)—Oh, Miss, it'll be like heaven to me to be your footman.

MARJORIE—(*Rising*)—There—there, Primrose. Don't cry—you're engaged.—(*Giving him the five dollars*)—That's for you. The basket will be ready in an hour; and you are to come again to see me tomorrow at noon.—(*CANER and ROMNEY EVANS enter at L.U.E. They are in evening dress. They pause up L. surprised at the sight of Primrose.*)

PRIMROSE—Thank you, thank you very kindly, Miss—(*Then he catches sight of the two men. He is panic-stricken, bobs to Marjorie, bobs to the men and scuttles out, C.E. to L.*)

CANER—(*Coming down C. to Marjorie*)—What's that old ragamuffin doing here?—(*Romney comes down L. to fireplace*).

MARJORIE—(*Calmly*)—I've engaged him as my footman.

CANER—Good Lord, you don't suppose I want a tramp like that about my house.

ROMNEY—That'll be all right, Morris. He's to take charge of the menagerie.

CANER—Menagerie! This thing's got to stop—every time I come down stairs, I fall over some strange animal.

MARJORIE—(*To Romney*)—They frightened him at first, but he's really getting used to them now—aren't you, Pa-pa?—(*Caner looks at Marjorie, his expression slowly changing from gruffness to affection. As she sees this, she impulsively hugs him. He give her an affectionate pat and shakes his head as much as to say "What can you do with a girl like that?"*)

MARJORIE—(*To Romney*)—He is getting used to them.

CANER—(*Throwing sofa pillows out of the throne chair*)—That's all very well, my dear—(*Pushes away footstool and sits in chair*)—But your menagerie does get on my nerves.

MARJORIE—(*Picking up sofa-pillow*)—I'm sorry, but you see the puppies are all so young yet—when they grow up, they'll learn to get out of your way.—(*Pokes pillow behind Caner's back*)—There—that's better—isn't it?

CANER—I suppose it is—the way you fix them, but I don't like the things.

MARJORIE—(*Picking up second pillow, tucking it in on the other side of Caner, soothingly*)—That's just because you haven't had anyone to make you comfy.—(*Places stool in front of chair*)—Now put your poor foot on the stool.—(*Lifts his foot and sets it on stool. Bell buzzes in hall. Presently Blodgett crosses in hall from L. to R.*)

CANER—Now that you've got me fixed—what about yourself? Has Dr. Thayer prescribed for you?

MARJORIE—(*Innocently*)—Oh, yes—yes, Pa-pa.

CANER—You feel better?—(*Marjorie nods*)—If he hasn't cured you by tomorrow, I'll get a nurse for you.—(*Blodgett appears at C.E. from R.*)

BLODGETT—(*Announcing*)—Mr. Arthur Sewall.—(*Enter ARTHUR SEWALL C.E. from R. Wears evening dress. Blodgett exits to L.*)

MARJORIE—(*Darting up stage, catching Sewall by arm, eagerly*)—Oh, tell me—tell me—have you read Mr. Quintard's opera?

SEWALL—(*Coming down C. with Marjorie*)—Yes, my dear child. Old Papa Sewall has read it. So have the other members of the committee. I saw to that.

CANER—(*Curiously*)—What's that?

MARJORIE—One moment, Pa-pa.

MARJORIE—(*To Sewall, anxiously, impatiently*)—Well, well! What do you think of it? Isn't it wonderful!

SEWALL—I'm sorry—but the committee will not have it—no—no!

MARJORIE—(*Unable to believe him*)—Won't have it? That's impossible! It—it's too—too beautiful.

SEWALL—Fine! Fine! Yes—yes—so we all thought—until we came to the last act! But what does your jackass of an author do then? He ruins his story by ending it tragically—(*Marjorie amazed*)—The thing calls for a happy ending. That's all there is to it—believe me.

MARJORIE—(*Exasperated*)—But it does end happily! You're wrong—you're wrong! I'll prove it!—(*Going back to the throne chair to table*)—I'll show you the original manuscript.—(*Gathers up manuscript from table*).

CANER—(*Testily*)—Marjorie! Marjorie! What's all this row about, anyway?

MARJORIE—Just a second, Pa-pa! I'm busy.—(*Going C. to Sewall, turning over last leaves of Mss.*)—Here it is—the original—in his own handwriting.—(*Gives Sewall the manuscript.*)—There!

SEWALL—(Taking manuscript)—Let me see.—(Goes to settee below piano, sits and begins to go over the manuscript).

CANER—(*Irritated*)—What's Marjorie got to do with the opera of a man I never heard of?

MARJORIE—(*Turning to Caner*)—I've had it typewritten for him.

SEWALL—(*In surprise*)—Why—this is entirely different! The idiot changed it!

MARJORIE—(*Turning to Sewall*)—CHANGED IT? Oh—no—he—he—wouldn't!

SEWALL—But he did! I remember now—the manuscript was typewritten—all but the end of the last act!—(*Marjorie is puzzled. Sewall resumes reading the manuscript. Romney lights a cigarette*).

CANER—You had it typewritten for him?

MARJORIE—(*Turning to Caner*)—Yes, Pa-pa dear! Grayson did it—perfectly.

CANER—(*Sarcastically*)—Oh, you don't say—neglected my business to typewrite an opera—and for whom, I'd like to know?

ROMNEY—A friend of mine.

MARJORIE—(*Going to Romney at fireplace*)—And mine!

CANER—I ask you—WHO IS HE?

ROMNEY—(*Taking Marjorie's hand*)—A man of real talents!

MARJORIE——A genius!

CANER—(*Impatiently*)—What's his name?

ROMNEY—Quintard.

MARJORIE—Anthony Quintard.

CANER—Never heard of him; where did you meet him? Romney introduce you?

ROMNEY—Yes!
MARJORIE—No! } (*Spoken simultaneously*).

CANER—Yes! No! What am I to believe?

ROMNEY—It's perfectly all right! I didn't actually introduce them—but I told them about each other—

MARJORIE—(*Climbing on davenport, leaning confidentially over the back toward Caner*)—You see, Pa-pa, we—we were neighbors. He lives next door.

CANER—(*Incredulously*)—There?—(*Points down stage R.*)

MARJORIE—Y-yes! It's only a step across the roof to his window. We—we became acquainted.

CANER—(*Angrily*)—Good Lord!

ROMNEY—Take it calmly, Morris!

CANER—Calmly? When my daughter scrapes an acquaintance with a strange man across the roof?

MARJORIE—(*Sinking back on the davenport, sitting on her heels*)—He's a very fine young man—isn't he, Romney?

ROMNEY—One of the best in the world. I'll vouch for him in every respect.

CANER—Oh, I don't blame him!—(*To Marjorie*)—I suppose you stood at your window MAKING EYES at him!

MARJORIE—(*Innocently*)—No! I climbed across the roof to his window!

CANER—Bless my soul! And you—Romney—to connive at such a performance.

MARJORIE—It was just like making a call on my neighbor—being friendly and so on.

CANER—In all my life I never heard of such a thing. I absolutely forbid you to cross that roof again.

MARJORIE—Yes, Pa-pa. Mr. Quintard has moved.—(*Caner is struck speechless*).

SEWALL—(*Suddenly rising from settee, bursting out with enthusiasm*)—It's fabulous—I tell you! Fabulous! Nothing could be better—(*Pounding the manuscript*)—Why that young idiot should have thrown away a finish like this—I can't understand.

MARJORIE—(*Bounding out of the davenport, triumphantly*)—Oh, Romney—he likes it—he likes it!—(*Goes to Arthur C.*)

SEWALL—It's a little masterpiece. We've got to do something about this.

MARJORIE—(*Excitedly*)—Yes—yes.

SEWALL—Quintard must restore the last act—as it is here. Or I'll poison him.—(*Bangs manuscript with fist*).

MARJORIE—(*Excitedly*)—He will—he must!

ROMNEY—You'll give him the prize then?

MARJORIE—Oh, yes, yes—of course you will—won't you?

SEWALL—I promise nothing! It will be up to the jury! But—if they reject it again—old Papa Sewall will take it himself—it's the book he wants—and he's going to have it!

MARJORIE—You'll give him ten thousand dollars for it?

SEWALL—Don't you worry—it will make his fortune! The question is, I know these authors—will he restore the original ending?

ROMNEY—You'd better have a talk with Quintard tomorrow.

SEWALL—No—tonight! Must see him tonight—Doesn't do to let these things get cold. Send for him, send for him.

MARJORIE—Yes—yes—we'll send for him!—(*Going to table back to davenport and taking card from drawer. She is excited*)—Romney, you must go after him! Bring him here! You needn't tell him where you're taking him—and not a word about me!—(*Hands Romney card*)—There's his address. Telephone for the car.

ROMNEY—I've got mine—waiting—(*Romney exits C. D. to R.*)

CANER—(*Looking Marjorie over*)—Huh! You've got a way of running things to suit yourself without consulting anyone.

SEWALL—Just like the old man! Hahah!

MARJORIE—Of course I am exactly like Pa-pa!

CANER—You are not!

SEWALL—She is, Morris—she is! Adventure! That's the spirit that made you take big chances—and without that you'd never been such a dreadful example of the self-made man! Marjorie adventures—just as you did—but for a better purpose.

CANER—Better purpose? Good Lord! The girl's made a fool of herself.

MARJORIE—(*Innocently*)—Have I done anything I shouldn't?

CANER—(*Warmly*)—Have you done anything you shouldn't? You scrape an acquaintance with this Quintard person—in the most extraordinary manner——

MARJORIE—It was the best way I knew!

CANER—(*Hotly to Sewall*)—She climbed across the roof—to his window.

SEWALL—Modern. Distinctly modern method. I approve.

CANER—Outrageous—I should call it! I wonder what the man must have thought of you.

MARJORIE—He was very grateful to me—I helped him with his opera.

CANER—It's a wonder he didn't make violent love to you.

MARJORIE—I wish he had!

CANER—(*Furiously, to Sewall*)—Do you hear that? Do you hear that?

SEWALL—It's interesting—original.

MARJORIE—He never made the tiniest bit of love to me!

CANER—(*Angrily*)—Why didn't he? Doesn't he like your looks?

MARJORIE—He likes my eyes. He said so.

CANER—Oh, he likes your eyes?

MARJORIE—But he's very poor—and—and fearfully proud.

CANER—Pooh! He was cautious—that's what he was—cautious. He wanted to be sure that you'd bring him money—they all do—and I tell you, my dear, I won't have it—you shan't marry a beggarly—.

MARJORIE—Don't be alarmed—he may be fond of me—but when he learns that I'm your daughter—I'll never see him again.

CANER—Oh, he objects to your father—eh? Who does he think you are, anyway?

MARJORIE—I told him I was the companion of your daughter. I had to—he hates rich girls—he doesn't want his wife to support HIM—he wants to support HER. Oh, be a good, dear Pa-pa, disinherit me!

CANER—(*Amazed*)—What—what? Say that again.

MARJORIE—You see, if you DISINHERIT me, I'll be poor. Then I can go to him—and tell him that I haven't a penny in the world—so—so he'll just have to marry me.

CANER—You're out of your mind! So is he!

SEWALL—You're out of your mind, yourself. Listen to me: Anyone who can write a book like this—(*Pounds manuscript*)—is an artist. Anyone who can make your daughter love him—is a man! He doesn't want your miserable old money—neither does she. Take my advice. Disinherit Marjorie and let her marry Quintard.

CANER—I will not disinherit her.

MARJORIE—Oh, please do.

CANER—Good God, isn't it bad enough to think of your marrying—going away from me—just when I've found that I want to—to have you near me.

MARJORIE—(*Touched*)—Oh, Pa-pa!—(*Catches his arm*).

CANER—(*Giving her hand a pat*)—My dear, I've neglected you—all your life—shamefully!—(*With gruff wistfulness*)—Let me

make up for it—don't refuse me the one thing I can do for you. I want to look after you—make you happy. I want to give you the biggest bank account of any girl in America. And when I die I want to leave you every cent I have in the world.

MARJORIE—Oh, dear Pa-pa—you're going to spoil everything. Tony won't have me—rich.

CANER—(*Angrily*)—But what right has this young snip to let a matter of money stand between him and a girl like you. It's absurd.

SEWALL—No. It's common sense. He's right—she's right—you will spoil everything for them.

MARJORIE—(*Turning to Sewall*)—Oh, thank you.

CANER—(*Turning to Marjorie, suddenly, strongly*)—I'll see this Quintard chap—when he comes.

MARJORIE—Pa-pa, if you do or say anything to offend him, I shall never, never love you again.

CANER—I'm going to make sure of your happiness.—(*Marjorie brightens up. He goes on with a sudden turn to strength*)—But you can make up your mind to one thing—I shan't disinherit you.—(*Bell buzzes in hallway*).

MARJORIE—(*Excitedly*)—There he is!—(*Rushes to window R.*)

CANER—(*Sharply*)—Marjorie! Come here! You're not to see that young man until I have interviewed him—reached my decision!

MARJORIE—(*Turning from window; disappointed*)—It isn't Tony—he'd come in Romney's car. It's just a taxi.—(*Blodgett crosses in hallway from L. to R.*)

SEWALL—Patience, little lady—these modern princes have no seven-league boots!

MARJORIE—The fairies lend them motor cars instead.—(*To Caner*)—If this is some dreadful old bore, you'll get rid of him right away—won't you?

CANER—Nothing shall interfere with the business of the night! (*Enter Blodgett C.D. from R. with card on salver. Marjorie goes up to him and takes card from salver. She looks at card. Is amazed*).

MARJORIE—(*To Blodgett—tartly*)—I told you that I never wanted to see him again.—(*Tears card in two*).

BLODGETT—But he insisted, Miss—said it was very important.

CANER—Who is it?—(*WALTER NICOLLS, in overcoat and evening dress, silk hat in hand, white gloves, cane over arm—brushes by Blodgett and appears at C.E. Blodgett, not knowing what to do, retires to hallway, standing there within sight of audience*).

WALTER—(*Smiling at Marjorie nervily*)—Heard your voice, Marjorie! Just had to see you! Been ringing your bell every day for a week—can't understand why you're always out when I call!—(*Sees Caner, who slowly rises and looks at Walter belligerently*)—How-de-do, Mr. Caner.—(*Nods to Sewall, who is down R.C.*)

MARJORIE—(*Standing up stage R. of C., speaking to Walter coldly but politely*)—I said good-bye to you the night I came home. I thought you knew that I didn't want to see you again.

WALTER—(*Taken aback, but keeping his nerve, smiling*)—Why—why—no! I didn't! I didn't suppose for a second that you were really serious about it.

CANER—(*Approaching a step nearer Walter, up stage C.*)—When my daughter says a thing—she MEANS it.

WALTER—(*In a hard tone*)—Oh, she does!

MARJORIE—(*Kindly*)—But if you like, I'll say it again. Good-bye!

WALTER—(*Quietly, but getting angry*)—That's a little rough—considering——

CANER—(*To Walter*)—My daughter has said "good-bye" to you TWICE. Now, I say, GOOD-NIGHT, Mr. Nicolls!

WALTER—(*Nastily*)—That's all right! But you don't know why she's turned me down—and neither you nor she can afford——

CANER—Blodgett!!! Mr. Nicolls is going!—(*Blodgett disappears in hallway to R.*)

MARJORIE—Please, Walter——

WALTER—(*To Caner, speaking rapidly, venomously*)—I'm not going till I tell you something you don't know!—(*Pointing to Marjorie*)—She's been having an affair with a man next door—(*Caner starts toward Walter*)—I got on to her—I WATCHED IN THE BACK STREET—a week ago yesterday—saw her climb out of his attic window— —

(*Caner suddenly catches Walter by the coat collar. Marjorie clasps her hand over her mouth, her elbows close to her sides, half frightened, half laughing, her eyes wide with excitement. Sewall looks on with mingled indignation and amusement*).

WALTER—(*Protesting violently*)—You—leave—me alone——

CANER—Blodgett! Open the front door!—(*He fairly lifts Walter off his feet, sweeps him out through the C.D. to R. Marjorie stands still, in the pose above indicated, up R.C. listening, blinking*).

WALTER—(*Off stage—breathlessly*)—That's—all—the—thanks—I—get—for—(*Sound of door suddenly closing with a bang. Sewall sinks down on settee R. shaking with noiseless mirth. Marjorie keeps her eyes fastened on C.D. Caner re-enters, re-adjusting his clothes*

and limping. Blodgett with an air of great satisfaction, crosses in hallway from R. to L.)

CANER—(*Out of breath, hotly, but elated*)—I guess I'm a match—for a young swine—like that! I knew what he was—I told Romney!

MARJORIE—(*Going to Caner, timidly, solicitously, breathlessly*)—Oh, Pa-pa, you're—you're wonderful! You—you dear STRONG thing.

CANER—(*Ready to whip a regiment*)—Oh, I'm strong enough to handle a whelp like Nicolls. But I don't intend to spend my life getting you out of scrapes. This is what comes of your wild excursions across the roof. Never let me catch you——

MARJORIE—How is—is—your poor foot?

CANER—(*Still feeling the joy of battle*)—My foot—my foot? There's nothing the matter with my foot.

MARJORIE—Oh yes there is! Don't you remember—you've got the rheumatism!

CANER—Oh, thunderation! So I have—so I have.

MARJORIE—(*Leading him to throne chair L. C.*)—Sit down Pa-pa—dear! Do sit down!—(*Gently pushes him into chair*)—There—there, now!—(*To Sewall, as she adjust cushions about Caner*)—Wasn't Pap-pa wonderful?

SEWALL—Fabulous!—(*Noise of motor horn blown off R. Marjorie rushes to window*).

MARJORIE—(*Excitedly*)—It's Romney's car! Yes, yes—Tony's with him!

CANER—You two clear out! Let me receive him. I'll send for you, Arthur, when I want you. And you, Marjorie—you keep away!—(*Bell buzzes in hallway*).

MARJORIE—You'll be—be very gentle with him—

CANER—(*Impatiently*)—Yes, yes, yes!—(*Blodgett crosses hallway from L. to R.*)

MARJORIE—And don't let him know that I'm Marjorie. He thinks that I'm his—his fairy god-mother!—(*Caner looks at Marjorie as though he thought her crazy, and waves her away. Marjorie and Sewall with the manuscript in his hand, exeunt L.E.U Caner sighs and sinks back in throne chair. Blodgett appears at C. D. from R.*)

BLODGETT—(*Announcing*)—Mr. Anthony Quintard, Mr. Romney Evans!—(*Enter Tony and Romney. Tony is dressed as in Act III. He is a little pale. Blodgett exits in hall to L. Caner rises*).

CANER—(*Offering his hand to Tony; addressing Romney*)—I wish you'd leave Mr. Quintard to me!—(*Shakes hands with Tony*).

ROMNEY—I'm satisfied!—(*With a smile*)—I've brought two great men together!—(*Romney exits L.U.E. Tony and Caner are standing L.C. estimating each other. Tony with a pleasant smile, Caner with a look of sober inquiry*).

TONY—You don't look like a musician.

CANER—I'm not!

TONY—(*Surprised, puzzled*)—But I came here to meet Mr. Sewall, the composer.

CANER—He'll be here in a few minutes. I'm Morris Caner.

TONY—(*Amazed*)—Morris Caner?

CANER—Yes.

TONY—This is your house?

CANER—Yes.

TONY—I thought there was something familiar about this street as we drove up! I used to be a neighbor of yours.

CANER—You see, I ought to know you. Won't you sit down?—(*Waves Tony to the settee below piano. Tony is not in the least afraid of Caner, but he is puzzled; looks about suspiciously as he goes to settee, and waits for Caner to be seated. Caner sits L. end and Tony R. end of settee*).—Sewall is an old friend of mine. I'm not what you'd call musical—but I take an interest in music—in all the arts—I've sometimes thought if I hadn't been so good at making money I might have painted a chromo or written a popular song.

TONY—I shouldn't have any regrets, if I were you. It's quite a stunt to have made a pile of money. I've often wondered how it's done.

CANER—(*Amused, but interested*)—I made my start as a three-dollar clerk in a little one-horse steel concern. I lived on two dollars—saved one. It took me five years to buy my first coke-oven.

TONY—What on earth did you want with a coke-oven?

CANER—You can't make a pound of steel without coke. I realized that the men who could control the coke industry would have the steel business by the throat—and that steel was the coming thing—the biggest thing in this country.—(*Pause for an instant*)—In my mind, I saw the hills of the Conemaugh Valley covered with coke ovens. And then mills, turning out my rails, and my own locomotives,, hauling my own greight, over my own roads—

TONY—(*Interested, almost excited*)—Go on—go on—it's an epic.

CANER—It all CAME—bigger than I had foreseen. The coke was the basic idea, if you understand me.

TONY—(*With enthusiasm*)—Understand you? I should say I did! It's wonderful—stupendous—what you big fellows do! You're all alike—financier—artist—the same in spirit! You work in a different medium, but you're all members of the great brotherhood of the imagination.

CANER—(*With a laugh, but flattered*)—You're getting beyond me, now.

TONY—Oh, no, I'm not! Coke-ovens, mills, railroads, bridges, tunnels, ships, canals—you create them all here—(*Taps his forehead*)—first, you big fellows, you Captains of Industry! That's the way you express your imagination—just as the artist paints his picture, the poet writes his song, the musician composes his symphony! We all see it here first—(*Taps his forehead*)—our Conemaugh Valley lit with its coke-ovens!

CANER—(*Pleased*)—I never thought of it that way.

TONY—Why do men like you care for art—fill your houses with beautiful things—go wild with enthusiasm when you've picked up a rare porcelain or a great canvas? It's simply one master taking off his hat to the genius of another.

CANER—That's a great tribute to pay us.

TONY—You're doing the right thing. You ought to be encouraged.

CANER—(*Laconically*)—Thanks. If what you say is true—then men like you and I should stand together.

TONY—Oh, we must—we must.

CANER—That's a bargain.—(*Rises, offers Tony his hand. Tony rises, takes his hand*)—And as your art cannot pay you as my industries pay me, it will be your duty to call on me—whenever you need a hand to help you over the rough places.

TONY—That's awfully decent of you.—(*Arthur Sewall appears at C.E. from L.*)

CANER—And remember, if you should refuse me the privilege of standing by you, you will be false to the brotherhood.—(*Tony nods and smiles. Caner holds out his hand again*)—We're friends—m'son!

TONY—(*Grasping his hand firmly*)—No wonder you're a big man.

CANER—(*Waving Sewall to enter*)—But here's the man you want!—(*Sewall comes down C. on L. side of Tony. Caner introduces them*)—Mr. Sewall—Mr. Quintard.

SEWALL—(*As he shakes Tony's hand*)—Confound you, my

dear boy, what the devil do you mean by spoiling that last act? You will have to go back to the original—do you understand?

TONY—(*Embarrassed*)—Yes—yes Mr. Evans told me as much. Of course, I'll be delighted to do it——

SEWALL—(*Triumphantly*)—Aaah! You are a good boy. The rest you may leave to me. If I cannot make those judges give you the prize old Papa Sewall will take the book himself.

TONY—I'm tremendously obliged to you! It's a wonderful thing for me to have a great musician like you—

SEWALL—(*Patting Tony on the back*)—You're an artist yourself my lad—I know—I know!

CANER—That's settled—only I'm going to see that he gives you a good contract, Quintard. That's as important to you as the happy ending is to him.

TONY—(*Smiling*)—Oh, I guess that'll be all right.—(*Suddenly, to Sewall*)—But how did you know about the happy ending?

SEWALL—I had a look at your original manuscript.—(*Tony is puzzled*)—

CANER—It seems that my daughter's COMPANION had the original manuscript in her possession—I believe she's an acquaintance of yours, Quintard.

TONY—Oh, yes—yes!

SEWALL—She showed it to me.

TONY—Why then—I I—I owe all my good luck to her.

SEWALL—Without a doubt.

TONY—(*To Caner*)—I wonder—would your daughter let Miss Mudge come down to see me?—(*Caner and Sewall are surprised and amused at his calling Marjorie "Miss Mudge." Tony is puzzled*)—I'd like to thank her.

CANER—I'll see if my daughter can spare Miss Mudge.—(*Caner exits L.U.E.*)

TONY—(*To Sewall*)—You feel pretty sure that the opera will be a go?

SEWALL—Oh, yes, yes, yes! It will be a sensation. It screams for the kind of music I write—it is so original—fantastic—romantic. I am so sure of it—I'll tell you what I'll do: If I cannot get that ten thousand for you, I'll give you one thousand as an advance on royalties myself.

TONY—(*Delighted*)—That would be very generous.

SEWALL—That is nothing—(*Taking card from his pocket and giving it to Tony*)—Here! You come to see me to-morrow—at noon—(*Shakes Tony's hand*)—We'll go over the manuscript together.—(Sewall exits L.U.E.)

(*Tony in a happy frame of mind wanders over to the piano. He mechanically picks up a piece of music. It is his song. He looks at it in wonderment*).

(*Marjorie enters C.E. from L. Tony hears her. He turns with the music in his hand. He is fairly stunned. He has never seen her look so pretty. She pauses at C.E. a little shyly, feeling guilty at having deceived him. He starts up towards her, holding out his right hand. The song is in his left hand*).

TONY—You look like—a fairy princess—not a fairy godmother!

MARJORIE—(*Shyly taking his hand*)—How are you, Mr. Cinderella-Man?—(*They stand there, holding each other's hand, looking at each other*).

TONY—How pretty you are!

MARJORIE—I asked you how you were.

TONY—Oh—I—I've been most miserable—but I'm very, very happy now.

MARJORIE—About your opera?

TONY—I didn't mean that so much—though, of course, I'm happy about it—Sewall has accepted it.

MARJORIE—I knew he would.

TONY—I owe that to you.

MARJORIE—You were very naughty. Why—why did you change it?

TONY—I was so unhappy—so fearfully unhappy—after you had gone that night—the old ending didn't seem right. I rewrote it out of my wretchedness.

MARJORIE—You—you missed me—a little?

TONY—(*Looking directly at her, speaking slowly, subdued*)—Oh, yes. Yes. Yes! I never missed anyone so much, and I didn't know how I should ever see you again. It made me desperate. You can't understand how wonderful it is to—to be able—just to look at you once more.

MARJORIE—(*With a nervous little laugh*)—I'm glad—to see—you—again.

TONY—(*After a pause, suddenly*)—Let's sit down and talk to each other.—(*Marjorie hesitates*)—You're free for a few minutes, aren't you?

MARJORIE—Y-yes, but don't you think it would be—be nice—if you were to meet the Princess.

TONY—Thank you, but I'd rather not—not now!—(*Leads way to settee below piano*).

MARJORIE—(*Sitting L. side of settee*)—What's that you've got there?—(*Indicating song*).

TONY—This? This is my song!—(*Sitting R. end of settee*)—I was wondering about it. It's dedicated to "Marjorie."

MARJORIE—That's the Princess's name.

TONY—Oh!

MARJORIE—She adores your song—she thinks it is the most beautiful song she ever heard. So you see, you really mustn't hate her any more.

TONY—I don't hate her. It's only that I don't want to see anyone but—just you. I've only got room for you in my thoughts—in my heart.—(*Marjorie looks away from him. She is worried. After a pause*).

MARJORIE—I'm not sure that you'll want to——

TONY—(*Looks at her puzzled*)—Not want to? Why my dear little girl, I love you. It was all I could do to keep from telling you that last afternoon in the attic. But it didn't seem right then—I had nothing—(*Goes through business of putting hand in his pocket and taking out some small change as in Act III.*)—seventeen cents—not a prospect! I didn't know how I could take care of you. And I've nothing yet. But it's coming—Sewall is confident that the opera will be a success. He is even going to give me a thousand dollars in advance—that's one hundred thousand cents. So now I feel that I can ask you to marry me.

MARJORIE—(*Rising and crossing toward throne chair L.C.*)—I wish I knew—what I ought to do.

TONY—(*Following her*)—It's all very simple—if you love me. We could be married in the spring—and go away to the country—to a dear, clean little cottage—I know of—on the edge of a hill. I'll have enough to keep us going till the royalties begin to come in. We'd be happy there. What do you say, dear?

MARJORIE—Oh, it sounds heavenly to me.—(*He starts toward her—she stops him with a gesture*)—I should love keeping a little home like that for you—A*He starts again toward her—she stops him. Then mounts the footstool and climbs into the throne chair*)—But I can't say "yes" until—you've asked the Princess!

TONY—(*Amazed*)—Asked the Princess?

MARJORIE—(*Sitting very dignified, solemnly, in what she purposes is the manner of a Princess, speaking almost tearfully*)—Yes! Please—ask—the Princess!

TONY—(*Staring at her, unbelievingly for a moment; then subdued, but desperate*)—You—you—you are the Princess?

MARJORIE—(*Tearfully*)—Yes! Yes! I've deceived you!

I'm the Princess! I'm horribly rich—and my father won't disinherit me.

TONY—(*Completely overwhelmed, speechless, shocked. Looks at her with bewilderment. Then in a hurt voice*)—You—you haven't played fair. You—you've been so—so kind—so generous—so adorable. I couldn't help loving you—and now I shan't be able to stop.

MARJORIE—You mustn't stop! Please go on loving me!—(*He backs away a little*)—Listen to me, Tony dear. You're MY PRINCE and I love you too well to spoil your dream. If you don't want my money, I'll give it away. But you must take ME—take me away to your clean, little cottage—I'll keep it for my Cinderella-Man in his own way—for it's my way, too!

(*Tony turns away from her slowly, trying to get his bearings. He starts up stage, his hand to his head. Marjorie thinks that he is repelled—that she has lost him. She wilts in the chair, her face in her hands, broken-hearted. Tony pauses up stage, turns about slowly, looks at Marjorie, starts as he sees her huddled in the chair. For a moment he does not know what to do. He takes a step toward her. He sees that she is sobbing silently. He hesitates an instant; then, under the sudden impulse of his great affection for her, he goes to the chair, kneels on the stool, his back to the audience, and takes her hand. Her head falls on his shoulder*).

CURTAIN—END OF PLAY

(*For Recall—Marjorie and Tony are sitting together in the throne chair. Caner, Sewall and Romney are standing at C.E., smiling at the lovers*).

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